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Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817














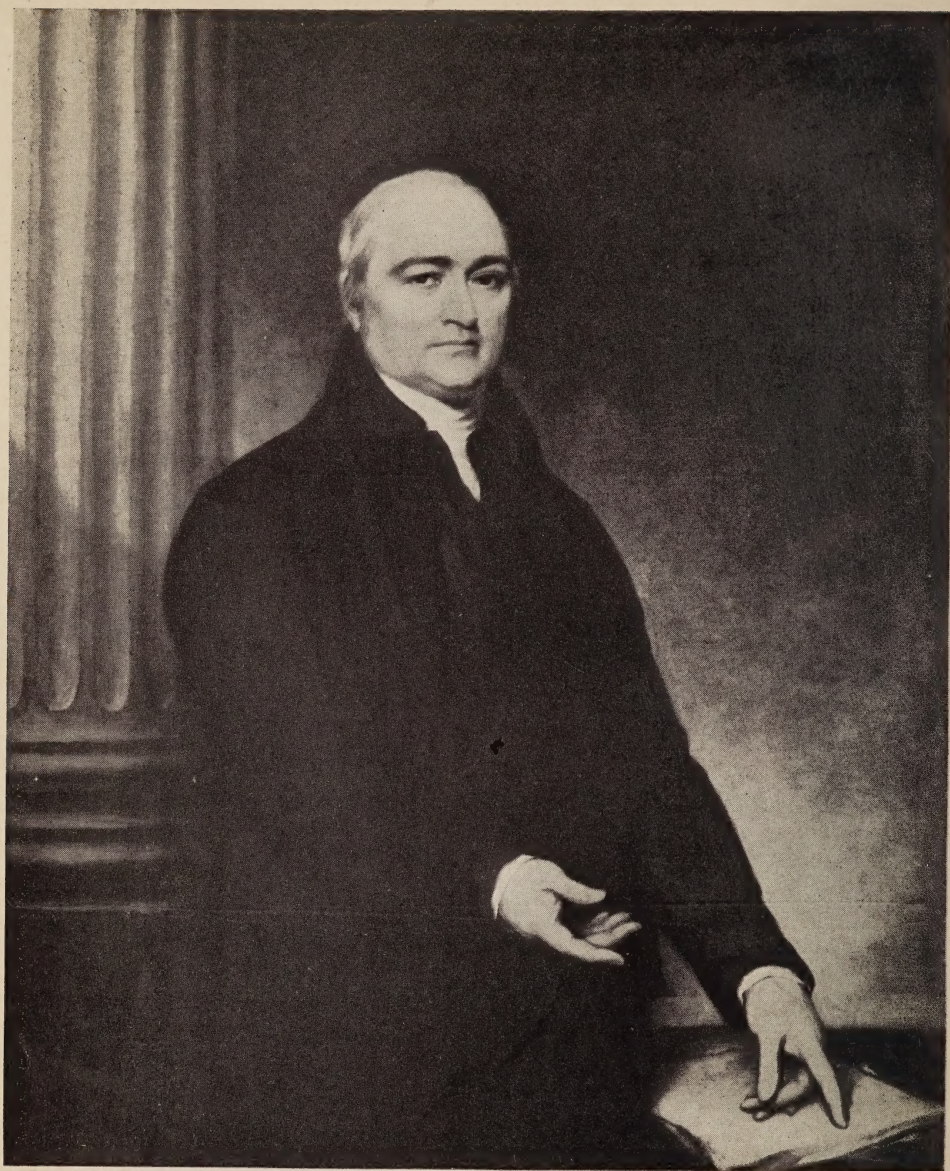




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*Timothy Dwight*

Portrait by John Trumbull (1817). Courtesy Yale University Art Gallery.



# TIMOTHY DWIGHT

1752-1817

## *A Biography*

By

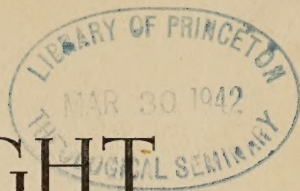
CHARLES E. CUNINGHAM



NEW YORK

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1942



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To  
SUSAN CHITTENDEN CUNINGHAM  
WHOSE BOOK IT REALLY IS





## Foreword

DR. DIXON RYAN FOX has a happy way of infecting others with his own enthusiasm for American history. Still, it is hardly fair to hold him responsible for the consequences. In this instance he can be blamed only for suggesting that Timothy Dwight deserved a biography. William B. Sprague's brief sketch, published in 1845, has long been out of date. More recent writers have usually dismissed Dwight quickly in a paragraph or two as an example of perverse and stubborn Puritan reaction. This description fails to explain why he won the general affection and respect of contemporaries during his lifetime. In spite of his national distinction and influence biographers have passed over Dwight, probably because his career lacked the drama of a political or military hero and because material is difficult to find. Dr. Fox, accustomed to pursuing history in other than the obvious places, insisted that enough might be gathered together upon which to base a clearer portrait.

The search, particularly for manuscripts, has been the chief problem and pleasure of making this study. The trail led from public and private libraries to the attics of old houses, and the chase was a long one. Much about Dwight's personal and family life remains obscure, especially for the important years when he presided over Yale. However, during that period his history is that of the college, and the record shows him to have been far from an enemy of progress. The story also reveals glimpses of the social and intellectual life of the time interesting to one who has a liking for such matters.

Unfortunately it is impossible to name here all who aided in the labor of this study. For this assistance, kindly and patiently given, and especially for the interested cooperation of the Dwight family, the author is genuinely grateful. His thanks go particularly to Dr.

Fox for his original encouragement; and to those of the publisher's staff immediately concerned with the book's publication. His greatest debt is to Susan Chittenden Cuninghame, who lived cheerfully through it all. Critic and indefatigable collaborator, helping in ways tangible and intangible, she saw that it was finished. If the result falls short of expectations, it is because the author did not always heed good advice.

C. E. C.

East River, Connecticut



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TIMOTHY DWIGHT





## CHAPTER I

### Years of Promise

THIS WAS no ordinary little ruffian. Soon or late most sons of Adam are caught stealing forbidden fruit. Prematurely, at the age of four, he too was found under an apple tree. But he was not there to do the customary thing. He was teaching the catechism to a group of Indians. That was the difference.

He had already met the first crisis of his career in characteristic fashion. He had learned the entire alphabet in a single lesson. Scorning a second as useless repetition, he had demanded a more advanced curriculum. The surprised aunt at whom he hurled this request, admitted it was justified. So, self-catapulted along the path of learning, he steadily accelerated the pace. At four, he was turning the pages of Scripture in an eager search for divine revelation. The longest sentences, the archaic vocabulary, held no terrors for him: he conquered them easily. Small wonder that he was even then equipped to enlighten savages with catechistic exegesis.

However, it was not until he was six that he interested himself in the mysteries of Lilly's famous Latin Grammar. Lilly's was still the standard in the middle of the eighteenth century when orthodox New England barred pride from the list of Puritan virtues. If, in their hearts, this boy's parents felt a forbidden glow of pleasure as they watched him build an impressive record, let us hope a kindly Deity (if not Calvin) forgave them. For thus early Timothy Dwight disclosed the qualities of a remarkable mind.<sup>1</sup>

Such precocity might be expected of one in whom blended the blood of two of New England's distinguished families. Birth as well as training shaped him for the role he was to play. Indeed, they made it almost inevitable. His paternal ancestors for five generations had been pillars of church and community. This was in

Massachusetts by their own choosing, in so far as the elect there were permitted to choose during that first memorable century when Providence guided so many across the Atlantic to Boston harbor.

The earliest of these was John Dwight,<sup>2</sup> who, at home in Dedham, England, had listened to the stirring sermons of the celebrated John Rogers<sup>3</sup> and thought them good. But Archbishop Laud called them bad, silenced the too eloquent vicar, and frowned upon those who liked his Puritan preaching. Matching the determination of the Archbishop, John Dwight decided that Laudian England bound life much too closely to be bearable any longer. Like a few stalwarts before him, he would seek an atmosphere free of the episcopal presence, where Indians would perhaps restrict his movements but not his opinions. Indeed, these benighted heathen offered a fair field for theological expansion. After the repression imposed by the unbendable Laud, it must have been a joy to contemplate the prospect of converting hundreds of fellow human beings to one's own way of thinking, particularly when their souls might be saved in the process. So, for better or worse, John Dwight settled his affairs and said goodbye to England.

With his wife and three children (a daughter and two sons, aged ten, six, and three respectively) he boarded a boat, and, one day in the winter of 1634-35, joined his similarly minded friends who were already breathing the bracing air around Boston Bay. There can be no doubt of his sincerity. He was no fortune-hunting adventurer. Bringing his family, he came to stay. He already had a good estate, and in America he built it up with resolution and success. He took a leading part in founding the town of Dedham, Massachusetts, and, as selectman, helped guide its affairs for the next sixteen years. Among other things, he voted to establish a free, tax-supported school, one of the earliest in the country; and, needless to say, he served the church as faithfully as he did the community. A successful "freeman," farmer, owner of his own land, and second wealthiest man on the town's tax list, he referred to himself in his will as "John Dwight, yeoman."<sup>4</sup> Neatly blending pride and humility, this simple title synthesizes much of a remarkable story. Winthrop, Cotton, Hooker, and the rest are the well known names but it was John Dwight, yeoman, his wife Hannah, and such as

they who cleared away the forest to build a new order and leave an example for their children to equal, if they could.

John Dwight's descendants did not fail him. According to the brief record, his son Timothy <sup>5</sup> inherited his estate and virtues, and added to both. This seems to have been the aim of each succeeding generation. Born in England, the son spent his life in Dedham, Massachusetts, strengthening the tradition. Town clerk for ten years, selectman for twenty-five, and representative in the General Court, he too was a man of consequence. As agent for the town, he negotiated treaties and land grants with the native chieftains, including King Philip himself. If occasion demanded, he used harsher methods. Having, in his younger days, trumpeted the calls of war as a military cornetist, he rose to the heavier responsibility of commanding a company of foot, with the rank of captain. Being a companionable person on a lonely frontier, he married six wives, in suitable succession. To the last of his eighty-eight years, he lived a life which earned him this simple inscription on the Dedham church records: "Captain Timothy Dwight, a gentleman truly serious and godly, one of an excellent spirit, peaceable, generous, charitable, and a great promoter of the true interests of the church and town."

The next in the line, Nathaniel,<sup>6</sup> with the spirit of his grandfather, moved farther west, first to Hatfield and then to Northampton, Massachusetts. There he settled, establishing a store and becoming a successful trader, farmer, and surveyor. Being also a useful citizen, he administered the office of justice of the peace, but, unlike his father, died prematurely at the age of forty-five. Nevertheless, he left a good estate for his son, in turn, to increase.

This was Timothy,<sup>7</sup> second of the name and fourth generation of Dwights in America. He too was brought up to be a pious Calvinist. Faithful to the tradition of public service, he soon made a leading place for himself in the life of his community and the colony at large. With the pioneering fortitude of his ancestors, he beat his way through the woods, in the dead of winter, to build an outpost against the hostile Indians on the remote Vermont frontier. In that year, 1724, he was a young lieutenant; but, winning his spurs in a rough school, he was soon promoted to a captaincy. With the aid of one good blacksmith, four carpenters, twelve sol-



diers, two teams, and a few narrow axes, he turned the yellow pines into a stout blockhouse where the little group of English men and women might take refuge from savage tomahawks and French muskets. "Fort Dummer" they proudly called it, in honor of Lieutenant Governor William Dummer, who wished the Captain success in sending down some "Enimye" scalps. It meant that the English were there to stay.

Even when the Indians were friendly, the young Captain had his troubles. Every morning they came to him for a good dram of "Rumm." Thus comforted, they returned in the afternoon for more. They nagged him, too, for shirts, pipes, bullets, powder, flints, and all the other treasures for which they envied this white intruder. They also looked upon him with resentful suspicion because he could not bargain with them in their own language. Whether peaceable or warlike, the savages were not the easiest neighbors with whom to pass the days and nights.

There were other difficulties within the garrison itself. His soldiers were sometimes restive for want of the "Nasaries" to which, in more cultured surroundings, they had once been accustomed. Hardy though they were, they petitioned the General Court at Boston for "beding" and for supplies of English goods which they might purchase at a "Resonaboll" rate. They also plaintively suggested that life might be almost pleasant if their own drams were multiplied: as it was, these came but three days a week and amounted to only about "half a Jill a Day." For these few things, the humble "suforors in his majesties sarvis" said, "we intreet you." Let us hope their prayer was answered. On "half a Jill a Day" they performed "hiroycall" exploits, scouting for the enemy and warning the towns of his approach. Captain Dwight saw to that.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile life became more pleasant for him when his wife joined him there, and their first child was born. Still, after nearly two years on this fringe of civilization, the young father found it good to move his family back to the comparative luxury of Northampton. As surveyor and colonel of a regiment, well accustomed to the sound of war whcops and the smell of gunpowder, he continued to help open the wilderness of western Massachusetts to settlement.<sup>9</sup>

But in Northampton itself he could be comfortable, his house

being recognized as the handsomest in Hampshire County. On the inside, it was said, the wallpaper was embossed with velvet figures six or eight inches in diameter. Probably more soothing to the eye were the oak panels, which, glistening like polished mahogany in the light of the blazing logs, covered the side of the room where the fireplace was. Here at his ease, the master of the house might have enjoyed the "bohea" his urban friend in Boston had sent him, if the ladies had only known how to prepare it. In their ignorance, they steeped the whole quarter-pound long and well, and the resulting concoction was so bitter they threw it out in disgust. On the coast the strange stuff was also known as "tea"—a substance with which residents of the interior soon became familiar, both socially and politically.

In public affairs Colonel Dwight took a keen and active interest. Always a prominent figure, he served for years at a time as selectman of the town, county judge, and deputy in the colonial General Court. However, he made his most enviable reputation as a lawyer who did everything he could to discourage litigation. Unlike most of his profession, he succeeded incredibly well at persuading disputants to arrange their differences amicably before a referee of their own selection. It was the boast of his old age that during eighteen years of his active practice in Northampton no inhabitant sued another at law.<sup>10</sup> Whether accurate or not, the statement indicates the controlling influence for good which this pious, respected leader undoubtedly exercised during a long lifetime in his community. Only with his old friend, Colonel Stoddard, did he share the honors and duties of being Northampton's foremost citizen.

Unawed by the responsibility of upholding such a record, the Colonel's son did quite as well, except in the matter of military titles.<sup>11</sup> He was content with a major's rank. Instead of fighting the French and Indians in his youth, he battled the classics at Yale for four years. Surviving this experience, he graduated in 1744 but disappointed his father by not entering the legal profession. He made this decision on the ground that the law offered too many temptations to do wrong. Of course, the old Colonel's career belied these fears, but the young man insisted upon going his own way, bent on a life of peace and good will rather than one spent in the

midst of conflict and animosity. He became a successful merchant and large landholder in Northampton, but in other respects followed his father's footsteps. Equally active in public affairs, he too served the town for long periods in many capacities—selectman, recorder, register of probate, and representative in the General Court of the colony. In 1758 he succeeded his father as judge of the court of common pleas, apparently having by that time overcome his fears of being enticed into legal evil. His newly acquired self-confidence was fully justified. He was completely incorruptible.

Satan himself could have made no headway against Major Dwight. When the colony of New Jersey granted its college permission to raise money by means of a lottery, President Burr of Nassau Hall naturally sent his brother-in-law twenty tickets to sell in Northampton. Before Major Dwight could test his salesmanship, the alert Massachusetts legislature passed a law prohibiting the sale of lottery tickets from other colonies. Massachusetts had lotteries and a college of her own to support. This business-like attitude balked the Major before he had made a single sale. He, therefore, awaited an opportunity to return the tickets to Princeton. Postal facilities being what they were, no opportunity came. According to the rules of the lottery, all unsold tickets not returned by a specified date automatically became the responsibility of the agent who held them. Major Dwight found himself holding twenty tickets, for all of which he was liable. A lesser man might have squirmed out of the predicament, or at least prayed for luck. Out of twenty chances he might have expected one to bring him a prize as consolation for an otherwise expensive situation. Such dishonest thoughts never entered the mind of Major Dwight. He had been bred in a stricter school. When the tickets had first come to him, he had selected one which he intended to keep himself. In the end, this particular ticket drew a blank. However, several of the others drew handsome prizes, including the highest which alone amounted to a tidy sum. Without debating the question, the scrupulous Major promptly paid for his blank ticket and returned the others without claiming a penny of the prize money. Princeton, ever ready to accept kindnesses from Yale men, did not demur.<sup>12</sup>



Such meticulous integrity plus a plentiful supply of corresponding virtues made him the successful candidate for the hand of Mary Edwards, third daughter of the great Jonathan.<sup>13</sup> Both had lived all their lives in the same small town. Their fathers had been intimate neighbors and associates for years. Throughout the bitter controversy which led to the dismissal of Jonathan Edwards from his church at Northampton, old Colonel Dwight was one who stood staunchly by the famous theologian. The event saddened him as much as it did Edwards, and he never afterwards entirely recovered his former good spirits. Indeed, the Colonel offered to split his own annual income in equal shares with Edwards, if the latter would remain as the minister of the families who loyally adhered to him. But these were so few that Edwards declined his friend's generous offer, thinking his field of usefulness would be too limited. Financially it would have been much to his advantage. As the world knows, he decided upon the move to Stockbridge, and it was because the family was about to leave for that frontier missionary post which the wilderness then made so distant, that Edwards and his wife allowed their daughter, Mary, to marry at the age of sixteen. Except for that fact, they must have rejoiced to have the son of their faithful friend as a son-in-law.

Their confidence was not misplaced. The match proved a happy one from the November day in 1750 when, not Jonathan Edwards, it is interesting to note, but Colonel Dwight himself performed the ceremony. Standing there before him, they must have been a striking pair, this bride of sixteen and groom of twenty-four. If her youth brought misgiving to the hearts of any in the assembled company, his stature alone should have reassured them. Six feet four inches tall, perfectly proportioned, powerfully muscular, he towered above her, a splendid specimen of a man.

Many tales of his amazing strength had already spread over the countryside. One related his conquest of a yoke of oxen. A fellow native was once strolling slowly down the road, driving a team of these sturdy beasts hitched to a heavy cart. The driver was urging the animals forward in a mechanically ritualistic manner. He was obviously deep in thought, doubtless lost in some delightful realm of a metaphysical imagination. This did not prevent him from waving his whip and mumbling the usual commands to his

oxen, as he plodded along beside them, heavy-footed as they. Dwight noticed his air of concentrated preoccupation, and succumbed to an innocent temptation. He quietly seized the cart in the rear and held it back until the sluggish oxen stopped completely. Unaware that human hand had halted his mighty beasts of burden, the driver, now quite alone, walked on down the road, still perfunctorily tossing his whip into the empty air and uttering the same cries to a team no longer there. The gibes of spectators soon burst his reverie, and there was much merriment at his expense. The story has value because it reveals that Major Dwight had a healthy kind of humor which might well have been crowded out of a being so filled with honesty of the lottery ticket variety. In his case the two were not incompatible.

On another occasion when this noble man was working in his garden, a braggart from a neighboring village stopped to express contempt for the Major's reputation as a man of muscle. The iconoclastic newcomer termed it mere myth, capable of being easily exploded, and boasted of his own power. Bold beyond belief, he went so far as to suggest a test of their respective talents if the Major had any doubts upon the matter. The Major had no doubts but professed his fear lest harm inadvertently befall the challenger in such an unequal combat. Since the Major was busy with his gardening, he permitted the banter to continue until he had hoed the last furrow. Having accomplished the main business at hand, he suddenly put his tool aside, seized his would-be antagonist, lifted the fellow bodily into the air, whirled him around overhead several times, and finally dropped him over the garden fence as lightly as he would an intruding weed. The convinced swain hurriedly left the scene of his humiliation and never renewed the argument. Major Dwight feared no man.

Perhaps, therefore, the tradition that he could carry his wife around the room, in the palm of one hand, at arm's length, may not be exaggerated. She was as small as he was large. In contrast to his good English face, light complexion, and light brown hair, she had the high forehead, oval face, black eyes, and dark hair of her father.<sup>14</sup> In mental equipment she also resembled him. Mature beyond her years, the daughter of Jonathan Edwards was capable of taking quite as good care of herself as her brawny husband.

He too was vigorous of mind as of body. Intellectually the two were always good companions because the Edwardean stamp was strong upon them both.

During the first months of their married life, philosophical speculation probably remained in the background while the young husband was building his bride a new house. It proved to be well worthy of her. Although on ancestral Dwight ground, it stood on King Street next to where she had lived with her parents. The fact is significant that Mary Edwards merely moved next door when she married. Long one of the finest houses in Northampton, her new home was architecturally the simple, substantial colonial dwelling typical of eighteenth century New England and now so highly prized by fugitive metropolitans.

It was built of wood, being two stories high. Shaded in the midst of elms, well back from the roadway, it was an inviting place to the large company of distinguished visitors who began at once to come there. In the middle of the house, a dignified doorway opened into an ample hall where a graceful stairway led to the upper stories. The stairway itself had been brought from England in the seventeenth century by John King, ancestor of Major Dwight and one of the earliest settlers in Northampton. On one side of the hall one entered a spacious parlor. On the other there was an equally large dining room. Both were pleasant rooms with handsome wooden cornices, painted white, bordering the ceilings, and deep windows containing seats. A large chimney with a fireplace stood at the rear of each room, where a mass of solid paneling covered the wall, each panel being a single piece of wood three feet or more in length, and a foot and a half wide. The furniture was doubtless in the best Puritan taste, including in the midst of the newer pieces such things as chairs and mirrors once used by the bride's parents, for some of these Edwardean treasures still remain in the Dwight family. True, this was not the house to be honored by the soothing presence of the first carpet in Northampton. That distinction belonged to others. However, as late as the close of the Revolution, and perhaps for some time thereafter, the town possessed only five houses privileged to boast a coat of paint. It is certain that the Dwight house belonged to this select company.<sup>15</sup>

In this stately, distinguished homestead the Major and his young



wife began life together and were well content to stay. Here on the 14th of May, 1752, came the first of their large and happy brood of children. It was a comfortable, cultivated, intensely Christian home in which precocious Timothy,<sup>16</sup> grandson of Jonathan Edwards, began his passage through this world of woe. Depraved little Calvinistic worm that he already was, this heir to the traditions of the Dwights and Edwardses enjoyed the privilege of an auspicious start.

Presumably he devoted his first two years to the customary infantile pursuits. Then, having found his bearings and had his fun, he rushed ahead intellectually at the frantic pace already indicated. In this he received every encouragement from a remarkable mother. To her fell the duty of conducting the early education of all her thirteen children. Her husband was too busy supporting this rapidly growing family to do more than uphold her methods, make occasional decisions, and, most important, furnish an immediate example to which she could point. So, the young mother, then only eighteen, took full charge of her eldest son's training.

From the very beginning she did a thorough job. Her mind had the same superior qualities for which her parents were famous. From her earliest memory, she had been accustomed to hearing the conversation of many learned men who sought the company of the most original theologian on this side of the Atlantic. The experience was not lost on her. Fully appreciating her father's greatness, she made the most of her opportunities. Largely as a result of her own experience, she came to the conclusion that children often lose valuable years of intellectual development because they are erroneously considered to be too young to be taught. She therefore determined that her own son should not suffer in this way. Timothy lost no time while his mother was watching him.

Nor did he need to be urged. Naturally greedy and quick to learn, he was at the same time little inclined to the normal, noisy sports of children.<sup>17</sup> Years later in a facetious, autobiographical essay, written in a notably light vein, Dwight pretended to admit the abnormalities of his youth. He relates that he rarely joined the other boys in their primitive occupations because these seemed too insignificant and cruel. While his companions made mud puddings, he says, he gazed at the sky and wondered who lived beyond it. When





*Courtesy of Mrs. Charles B. Cole.*

The Dwight homestead at Northampton, Massachusetts.



*Courtesy Yale University Library.*

The house occupied by Dr. Dwight as President of Yale.



they pelted frogs in a neighboring pond, frightened butterflies, or robbed bird nests, he interfered to prevent the havoc, thereby bringing upon himself the full force of his companions' juvenile wrath. He claims to have regained the good graces of these savage playmates by giving them the oranges which rewarded his own diligence at school—prizes which they seldom won. Indeed, his good nature led him to surrender his top whenever his little brother cried for it. He often gave his gingerbread to his younger sister because she had eaten hers and looked sorry. It was thus that he derived his pleasures. Every "occurrence of happiness" swelled his boyish bosom with joy. He delighted in flowers, mountains, and all the natural beauties and "diversities of infinite workmanship." He loved books but was indifferent to money. He loathed to offend his Maker. Some thought him a great genius. Skeptics considered him a simpleton. All agreed he was odd. Dwight composed these confessions to introduce a series of Addisonian essays.<sup>18</sup> Writing for literary effect, his intention was to amuse, not to give an accurate account of his boyhood. Obviously, it is all too good to be taken literally.

Yet, back of much of it there was perhaps some basis in fact. Certainly he cared more for his studies than for depriving a mother robin of her young. He was naturally sociable, inquisitive, and intelligent<sup>19</sup>—qualities which his mother took care to cultivate early. Almost as soon as he could speak, she began his formal course of instruction. Her first concern was to enable him to distinguish between Edwardean right and wrong. She taught him to love God and his neighbor, and to walk strictly in the middle of the narrow path laid down by the Ten Commandments. He was not merely to avoid sin but to hate it.

Under such adequate maternal stimulation, his conscience soon began to function effectively. At six he was quite aware of his own depravity. Even then he knew that his hope of pardon at the hands of a justly angry God lay only in the divine mercy through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Good conduct would avail him nothing. Nevertheless, his mother hastened to add, he was to model his behavior upon that of the Saviour, and he could not begin too early. Later he understood better why the two positions were reconcilable.<sup>20</sup>



Doctrinaire though these teachings were, a few practical experiences soon made real to him the code he was to follow. These events of his childhood also show what an effective instructor can accomplish with a receptive pupil. It was a rare occasion when Timothy wandered unwittingly from the way his mother was pointing out to him. In the interest of truth, it must be admitted that his record does, after all, include stolen fruit.

Under the eternally evil influence of older boys, he once succumbed to the lure of pears. Some schoolmates, more advanced in the ways of a wicked world, suggested that a little effort in a neighboring yard would bring an appetizing return. They persuaded Timothy, in his innocence, to join them. Still too young to go unguided through the maze of moral niceties, he stuffed his pockets full, and hurried home with a generous supply as a gift for his mother. Here was innocence, indeed. His mother, of course, asked him how he had acquired such splendid pears. He explained in detail. Whereupon she was forced to unfold to him the tragic fact that he had broken the Eighth Commandment. The significance of that he knew already. Bursting into tears, he immediately took the pears back to their rightful owner, Mrs. Kingsley, the wife of a deacon in the church. That kindly lady listened to his confession with affectionate sympathy. But she found it impossible either to induce him to keep the pears, or to soothe him in any way. It was to God that he had to answer. No one else could grant him absolution.

The next day there were pears on the Dwight dinner table. They came from the same source of supply, this time as Mrs. Kingsley's neighborly gift to Timothy's mother. But Timothy himself steadfastly refused to touch them because he feared they might be the same pears he had taken the day before.<sup>21</sup> He had sinned once. Nothing could remove the guilt of that. Nevertheless, he did not mean to intensify matters, if he could help it. Timothy learned the Edwardian point of view early and well. This was no trivial incident quickly forgotten in the rush of childish impressions. It left an indelible mark which never faded. In the family of Jonathan Edwards the religious fervor of the Great Awakening did not die within a single generation. It was normal that his grandson should learn at a tender age to feel deep in his heart the wickedness thereof.



While Mrs. Dwight gave her son a thorough grounding in the ethical application of Edwardian dogma, she did not neglect his progress in other fields. His hours of study were as regular as they would have been in a school. As the number of Timothy's brothers and sisters rapidly increased, the nursery came quite literally to resemble a schoolroom. Nothing was allowed to interfere with the established routine in that sacred spot. Twice each day at a stated hour she heard her son recite his lesson. Then followed a period of reading when he was permitted to peruse whatever he preferred. When only four, he was, of course, able to read easily; and by granting him this latitude in the choice of books his mother stimulated a habit of reading as well as a fondness for it. His favorite selections were the historical parts of the Bible. These he read over and over, and then told them all to his mother with enthusiasm. The familiar stories became so fixed in his mind that he ever afterwards remembered them to the last detail. A naturally retentive memory made this easier. In fact, he frequently surprised his elders, and distressed his own generation, by the way he could repeat, with minute accuracy, stories or lessons of prodigious length, which he had casually heard or read.<sup>22</sup> He developed this faculty to a phenomenal degree, particularly in later years after the failure of his eyes made it imperative. Meanwhile, he gathered the grain of learning and stored it away until the bins were soon filled to overflowing.

Even then he was so bursting with knowledge that he found it impossible to keep it all to himself. It was at this time that he did his first teaching beneath the apple tree. Under his mother's inspiring supervision, he was for the moment engaged in conquering such Sabbatarian fundamentals as the catechism, Watts' *Divine Songs*, and the art of prayer. At the close of one of these lessons, Mrs. Dwight happened to remark that it was a great pity there were so many heathen in the world who had no one to give them similar instruction. She cited the unhappy lot of the American Indians as an example near at hand. How awful that such a multitude of human souls should be destined to eternal damnation! Although the heathen themselves were happily unaware of the dreary prospect before them, their unenlightened state immediately aroused Timothy's Christian sympathy.

One day soon after, he failed to come home at the usual time. The hour grew late and he was still missing. The route home involved crossing a brook on a dangerously narrow board. The family, therefore, became worried and started a search. Eventually they found him, not in the brook, but very much alive under an apple tree busily imparting the truths recently imbibed from his mother to a group of Indian men and women. Timothy had learned that a human soul is a human soul, whether heathen or Christian, red or white, masculine or feminine. He made no distinctions. But how far he had carried his listeners from darkness to light, how far along the road to salvation they were willing to go with him, we do not know. Whether they argued in favor of their old errors and heckled him for his, whether it turned out to be a debate or merely a lecture, are questions to which there are no available answers. Unfortunately, the record does not reveal the heathen reaction to this youthful missionary. Obviously, he must have held their interest, and if he impressed them as he did more critical audiences in later years, he probably went far toward accomplishing his purpose.

However, his pedagogical efforts were interrupted by the news that his worried mother was waiting for him at home. Once he was safely in her arms, she rebuked him for causing her so much anxiety and asked for an explanation. His story was simple. He had met some Indians in the street, and asked them if they would like to hear about God and religion. They said they would. So he suggested sitting in the orchard. The business had become absorbing. That was all. In selecting an apple tree, he chose a peculiarly appropriate spot for such a scene. Surely, his mother could not have punished him. Like her own father at Stockbridge, he was eager to enlist in the war against heathen ignorance.<sup>23</sup>

For the moment he was forced to curtail his crusading zeal while he acquired more skill in the use of the necessary arms. When he was six, his mother, with a growing family on her hands, entrusted his formal education to the master of a local grammar school. Here he came into contact with older, more advanced students. Not wishing to be behind them in learning, he soon began to beg for permission to take up Latin. In spite of his maturity and the fact that he had already shown what he could do, his father con-

sidered him still too young for such a solid study. Major Dwight thought it time to apply the brakes. He refused to buy Timothy the books he needed for Latin, and instructed the master to keep the child away from all things Roman.

Major Dwight did not yet realize the resourcefulness of his eldest son, to whom large obstacles were always small. During the intervals between recitations while the older boys were enjoying their play, Timothy borrowed their books, and, with quiet concentration, made the most of these stolen opportunities. It was his only recorded, willful breach of parental authority. So successful was he in his iniquity that before either his father or the master of the school discovered what was going on, Timothy had twice gone through Lilly's Latin Grammar. This starchy diet merely stimulated his appetite for more. Its secrecy added spice, but the surreptitious aspect of the business troubled him. In the hope of legalizing it, he nagged his mother until she finally confessed to his father that it was useless to try to control such enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, the master of the school found what amazing progress the boy had made on his own initiative, and he too urged the father to relent. Not wishing to insist upon compulsion, and having done everything else to discourage his irrepressible son, Major Dwight reluctantly bought the necessary books. But he ordered the schoolmaster to keep the ambitious one at other studies as much as possible, and to allow him to proceed with Latin only when there were other students with whom he could be classed. At this opportune moment, a lad sixteen or seventeen years of age entered the school to prepare for Yale. This meant Latin, and Timothy joined the newcomer to form an uneven class of two. The older boy found it impossible to keep up with his young rival, either in the quantity learned or in the manner in which he absorbed it. The master appealed to the young gentleman's sense of shame at being outdone by such a small child, but there was nothing the poor fellow could do about it. Later his humiliation was completed, for, when he had finally achieved the dignity of a senior at Yale, the relentless Timothy was close at his heels as a freshman. Under the stimulus of competition, Timothy moved ahead so rapidly that he would have been ready to enter college himself at the age of eight, but his teacher evidently departed suddenly and the school



was closed. This interrupted the boy's progress in the classics, for his mother now resumed the direction of his education along other lines.<sup>24</sup>

The pace was still rapid. She merely diverted him from Latin to geography and history. In geography the available facilities were limited. Salmon's *Grammar* was the only work to be had, since the Reverend Jedidiah Morse had not yet given the country his famous *Geography Made Easy* with its stories of squirrels who crossed streams by embarking upon planks and erecting their tails as sails to the wind. That was geography made too easy. Timothy depended upon more substantial fare.

Mr. Salmon's title page indicated the wealth of learning to which it led. Besides promising to render the study of geography "both entertaining and instructive," the *Grammar*, it announced, did not limit itself to "A Description of the Figure and Motion of the Earth" or to "Geographical Definitions and Problems," but also gave a full account of

the Situation and Extent of the several Countries contained in each Quarter of the World; their Cities, Chief Towns, History, Present State, respective forms of Government; Forces; Revenues, Taxes, Revolutions, and memorable Events. Together with An Account of the Air, Soil, Produce, Traffic, Curiosities, Arms, Religion, Language, Universities, Bishoprics, Manners, Customs, Habits, and Coins, in Use in the several Kingdoms and States described.

All this was by the redoubtable Mr. Salmon, the whole being illustrated with a set of twenty-three maps of the several countries, drawn under his personal direction, and engraved by none other than "Mr. Jeffreys, Geographer to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales." If, as seems likely, Timothy used the third edition of this encyclopedic medley of information, published in London in 1754, he had the advantage of "very great Additions and Improvements."

It was a thick, compact volume containing six hundred and forty pages of close print. Mr. Salmon submitted it particularly to the youth of Britain, but in his preface modestly suggested that its charms of brevity and novelty would render it irresistible to the general public. For here, an hour's reading would give a gentleman



a "tolerable" idea of any country about which he might inquire; the senator and politician could view the constitution, "forces," and revenues of the respective states; the divine might observe the religions and superstitions (he mentions them in the same breath) of the peoples of the earth; the merchant and mariner might find a succinct description of the produce, "traffick," periodical winds and seasons in the various climates of the globe.<sup>25</sup> Although Mr. Salmon's first love was England, he covered everything from "Sclavonia" to Guinea, from Siberia to the Cinnamon Isles, from Hudson Bay to Patagonia. He found room for tables of latitude and longitude, to say nothing of sundry digressions. It was a noble mine of information. Timothy plumbed its depths with profit.

He was not compelled to depend entirely upon that all-embracing compilation. Fortunately, his father had good maps for that time, as well as books of travel. But it was his mother again who chiefly guided him from place to place until he felt at home in the capitals of Europe, in the centers of equatorial barbarism, and in most of the way stations. She made the journey such a fascinating one that, for the remainder of his life, he was always gathering new information about the lands he was never able to visit as well as regions nearer home. In later years whenever he rode or drove his horse on a trip through the New England countryside, he invariably carried a pocket notebook in which he recorded, on the spot, memoranda concerning what he saw and learned. With a degree of inquisitiveness unusual even in a Yankee, he drew data from fellow travelers and natives who were unaware that it was in them. His friends made it a practice to bring their geographic questions to him. He nearly always had the answer.

In history his father's library was richer. He read everything he found there and whatever else he could borrow. Since he was already familiar with the historical parts of the Bible, his mother first turned him loose on Josephus and Prideaux, and the more modern history of the Jews. Then he devoured Rollin, Hooke's History of Rome, various histories of Greece and England, and accounts of the first settlers in New England, particularly their wars with Indians. It was a large dose for a ten-year-old. He thrived on it, and never forgot what he assimilated at this age. Constantly adding to it, he later gained the reputation of knowing

as much in this field as any of his contemporaries—a tribute to himself and his original teacher. Dwight always gave his mother full credit for what she did for him at this early period.<sup>26</sup>

Being schooled at home, he was with his parents much of every day. He became unusually attached to their companionship, and took a keen interest in the company which came to his father's hospitable home. Major Dwight enjoyed the society of men of culture and intelligence, particularly clergymen. His house resounded to much good conversation—good in every sense of the word. No doubt Mary Edwards did her part to make it better. Timothy delighted in it all, well aware that this was a privilege from which he must benefit. He listened eagerly while his father's friends debated the men and issues of the day.

A favorite practice with this circle was to analyze the characters and achievements of the greatest of their contemporaries. They were in general agreement upon the two figures whom they considered pre-eminent. These were Jonathan Edwards and William Pitt. The selection was natural. At this time Edwards had written his last monumental treatise and lately gone to his Maker. Pitt was turning the Seven Years' War from defeat to glorious victory, a matter as vital to Massachusetts as to the mother country. To Timothy, soaking in every word his elders uttered, these two great men appeared as models worthy of imitation. He determined in his own mind to try to be as great as they. Pitt was at that moment a hero who would appeal to any boy. But by the time Timothy was ready to enter upon his own career, the Great Commoner's star had declined, and other influences led young Dwight to prefer his own grandfather as the model to be followed. It was a high goal. He could be content with nothing less.<sup>27</sup>

His first experience away from home indicated that he was in a fair way to achieve it. Before he was twelve, his parents packed his things, and shipped him off to Middletown, Connecticut, to resume his study of Latin and Greek under the Reverend Enoch Huntington.<sup>28</sup> This worthy gentleman, a recent graduate of Yale (in the class of 1759), had distinguished himself as a brilliant student and winner of the Berkeley scholarship. After the usual theological training, he became pastor of the First Church in Middletown, with which he remained for the rest of his life. Con-

gregational clergymen in New England were not then the wandering itinerants they became in a later less evangelical era. On the other hand, ministerial salaries were the same, and, like others of his profession, Mr. Huntington found it necessary to supplement a meager income by preparing private pupils for college and the ministry. His success gained him a wide reputation as a teacher and classical scholar, and, being engaged in these congenial pursuits, he maintained a lively interest in his Alma Mater.

Altogether he was well qualified to make an inspiring impression upon his pupil. His clerical colleagues in Connecticut already recognized his superiority as a preacher. Particularly eloquent when opposing British oppression, he, like others of his calling, gave unwavering support to the colonial cause during the years leading to the war for independence.<sup>29</sup> From the pulpit as well as in the privacy of the pastor's study, the observant Timothy doubtless heard more than one vivid denunciation of the Stamp Act outrage, and may have learned to share his instructor's enthusiasm for American freedom. Connecticut was ever in a cocky mood. Her clergy helped to keep her so. Such was the man under whose stimulating tutelage Timothy pursued the classics.

It was serious business making ready for college. He lived in the same house with the good clergyman's family, gaining their affection by his amiable manners and studious habits. He spent most of what could have been leisure hours so buried in his books that other members of the household frequently passed through the room, or even summoned him to meals, without distracting his attention. With such concentration and his natural aptitude, his progress was, of course, rapid. He acquitted himself both honorably and brilliantly. His conduct socially, morally, and scholastically was exemplary. It must have more than satisfied the anxious expectations of his parents, for, after little more than a year, he left Middletown having read not only the classical authors then required for admission to college but most of those studied during the freshman and sophomore years. Jonathan Edwards had entered Yale at the age of thirteen. His grandson might have done so at eight, had it not been for the unavoidable delay caused by the closing of his school earlier in Northampton. Nevertheless, he did very well. He too arrived in New Haven at thirteen, bored, not



in the sophisticated manner of the twentieth century freshman, but because he had to repeat so much of what he already knew. In the race with his brilliant grandfather, he was neck and neck at this turn in the track.<sup>30</sup>

In September, 1765, probably quite unafraid, Timothy faced the college entrance examiners. He had to convince the President and tutors that he could read, construe, and parse accurately at sight Tully, Virgil, and the Greek Testament. He had to prove his ability to write "true Latin" prose, and display a thorough familiarity with "the Rules of Prosody and vulgar Arithmetic." The requirements compelling him to produce "suitable Testimony of a blameless Life and Conversation" could have caused him no more difficulty than these others. He met the test with flying colors, impressing the authorities not only by his youth but also by his unusual command of every subject upon which he was questioned. It was an exhibition, honorable to himself and his instructor, which inspired the faculty with the feeling that here was a scholar of genuine promise.<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately, the condition of the college was not then so favorable for the development of that promise as it might have been. President Clap was contending with many forces which were working for his removal. His administration had been full of storms. A particularly violent one had occurred the previous year when two tutors had succumbed to the theological errors of Sandemanianism. Clap had considered such apostasy more than sufficient ground for demanding their resignations. The affair had aroused much bitter feeling, as a result of which the remaining tutor also gave up his position. Only two new men were appointed to fill the vacancies, and, as the year progressed, they, too, found themselves unhappy under the President's stern rule.

At that moment, then, the faculty consisted of only four members, the President himself, the Professor of Divinity, and the two newly appointed tutors. Normally the freshman class would have had a tutor of its own, whose duty it would have been to devote his entire attention to that one class, taking them through all the various subjects studied during the first year. Dwight's class was without a regular tutor, with the result that they were shifted haphazardly from one instructor to another. For the most part



President Clap, then well along in years and past his prime, shared the burden of the freshmen with the Professor of Divinity; but frequently they unloaded it upon the younger tutors. Such irregularity and continual change had obvious disadvantages.

It was particularly unfortunate for one so young as Dwight during that first important year when the struggle to become acclimatized in the midst of strange surroundings is usually no easy task in itself. Timothy also had the handicap of a broken arm during the winter, and, in the spring and summer, sickness kept him away from his studies for three months. Toward the close of the year President Clap resigned his office, and for a time the students were dispersed. All these circumstances combined against the formation, or, in his case, the preservation of studious habits.<sup>32</sup>

More serious was the generally run-down condition of the institution. President Clap had filled his office with distinction but with less and less vigor as old age overtook him. A learned scholar, he tended to become more engrossed in his own dignified studies than in the management of boys. For several years he had allowed discipline to become lax. The whole atmosphere of the college was humid. The students took advantage of every administrative weakness. Diligence in the classroom was rare. The food in the Commons was so "execrable" that the young men seized the excuse to have meals in their own rooms. This was a dangerous defense against academic cookery because it provided an overwhelming opportunity for pleasant entertainment. The participants soon emphasized proficiency in the latter art at the expense of more studious habits.

Groups brought together over an evening meal easily succumbed thereafter to "revelry and riot." The temptation, particularly, to drop into a game of cards was too strong to be resisted. At the first shuffle came the inevitable suggestion to spice the fun with a stake. As the excitement of the game mounted, the more scholarly muses sank forgotten into the shadows of the night, and the goddess of chance reigned supreme over gay and giddy youth. The upper-classmen, who had been longer exposed to these pernicious influences and were therefore old in the ways of iniquity, were likely to be heroes in the admiring eyes of young freshmen away from home perhaps for the first time. In the face of such a formidable

enemy, innocence fought a losing battle. Young Dwight was sociable, bright, and popular even with the older students, who usually did not deign to mingle with such inferior scum as freshmen. Seniors invited him to join their games and refused to take "No" for an answer. The temptation was too much.

The situation was more aggravated because it developed during a postwar period when the moral tone of the whole country was low. After the Seven Years' War came the usual demoralizing aftermath. In later years Dwight, looking back upon this era, characterized it as the time when New England was first exposed to principles hostile to those upon which that land of purity had been founded.<sup>33</sup> Before 1755, he explained, New England had clung comparatively undisturbed to her "steady habits." There had been changes, but not in fundamentals. New England continued to observe the Sabbath strictly. She had no doubts concerning divine revelation. She had the same reverence for God, the same love of justice, truth, and benevolence, the same respect for His commandments. But the outbreak of the Seven Years' War brought influences which tended to undermine this blessed state of things.

"Foreigners" for the first time mingled extensively with the inhabitants of New England. Officers of the British army carried with them new and dangerously irreligious views. Many were outright "infidels." Infidels always seek converts. In the native colonial troops they found fertile ground for their impious proselytizing. Most of their American companions in arms had never heard the Scriptures questioned. Naturally they were unprepared to answer the arguments and doubts expressed by these convincing strangers from another world. The colonials were men of action, far better qualified to lead a company through the woods against a lurking enemy than to meet the subtle attacks of a diabolical foe hidden in the maze of philosophical speculation.

They looked up to the British officers as superiors in wisdom as well as in military rank. The word of a British colonel carried authority. He came from the mother country, which was then still venerated as the birthplace of knowledge, renowned as much for its arts as for its arms. These English officers were men of the world, charming in manners and fluent in conversation. They were skilled in all those "genteel vices" which, when recommended by

engaging manners, seem to confer distinction upon those who adopt them, and generally fascinate gay, impressionable young men. Consequently, said Dwight, many Americans fell a prey to the loose doctrines and practices of their British friends.

When the long war was finally won and they returned home, they found it impossible to settle down in the old unexciting routine. They had no desire to exchange their new principles and habits for the sober doctrines and lives of their fellow villagers. They had drunk too deeply of the poisonous cup, and now themselves became sources of contagion, spreading the corruption. Towns in all parts of the country felt the infection. For the most part, the famous religious revival known as the Great Awakening had burned itself out, from its own tremendous energy, before the war had brought these evils. Then, following the Peace of Paris in 1763, came the demoralizing postwar reaction. In New England, so long accustomed to strict Puritanism, the relaxation of morals and the looser principles were all the more noticeable. Inexorably the restless youth of Yale College was affected. Timothy, a student there between 1765 and 1769, could not avoid the danger.<sup>34</sup>

It was a stern test of the pious principles of sobriety and virtue which he had imbibed from the cradle. Thrown suddenly into the midst of so many temptations at the age of thirteen, it is not surprising that he faltered. Nay, he stumbled badly. He fell, alas, into the vice of card playing. However, he did not reach the bottom of the pit, as did many of his classmates. His mother had trained him so long and so thoroughly in Edwardian ethics that, to his credit, he never actually gambled.

That would have been against his finer instincts as well as a violation of the college laws, which expressly prohibited playing "at Dice or Cards, or even any lawful Play, for a Wager." The penalty was a fine of two shillings, sixpence for the first offense, five shillings for the second, and possible expulsion for the third. Such severity indicates the seriousness with which the lawmakers regarded the crime. Since every freshman was obliged to buy a printed copy of the statutes when he entered the institution, ignorance of the law was no excuse for transgression.

Yet, conditions were such that Eleazar Wheelock solemnly



warned two of Dwight's classmates against being enticed by older students into any "fashionable" practices contrary to the college rules—specifically, playing cards, bringing forbidden liquors into the rooms, reviling the academic authorities, and devising plots. No doubt, before leaving home Dwight, too, had heard the common parental admonition to shun all sin, but "especially card-playing." So far as it meant wagering, he obeyed. He steadfastly refused to stake a farthing. Nothing ever moved him from that resolution. But he did play for amusement. He played long and frequently.<sup>35</sup>

Having already done most of the work required in the first two years of college, and being bright, he found it easy to perform creditably in the classroom with a minimum amount of effort. Time hung heavily on his hands. It was only natural that he should waste it over a card table. This was wicked enough. The college laws attempted to legislate against this evil, stating that any student who, without the permission of the President or the proper tutor, should go fishing or sailing or "undress himself for Swimming, in any Place exposed to Public View," or go to any meeting "for youthful diversion . . . whereby precious Time may be unprofitably spent," did so at the risk of being fined up to two shillings.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, Timothy paid no heed. At meetings "for youthful diversion" he tossed away precious hours with reckless abandon. Altogether his first year at Yale was virtually a complete loss. Infidels might think it just as well to subject such a serious prodigy to a few worldly influences. As it turned out, the experience was invaluable. Jehovah was merely laying on the lash.

But there was much danger in the process. Conditions in his sophomore year were no better. Playing cards had become such a habit that he indulged it more than ever—merely for amusement, be it always remembered. He again lost most of the winter from illness. This time it was poison ivy, undoubtedly with complications, for it compelled him to remain at home for four months. He returned from Northampton only to resume his former wasteful habits. Fortunately, he now had as tutor a man able to understand the situation and eager to right it, one who was not so buried in the dust of his own dead researches that he forgot his responsibility to the youth who looked to him for guidance.



This was Stephen Mix Mitchell, then a brilliant young graduate of Yale much in favor with the students. Later he had an eminently useful and distinguished career in Connecticut public life, climaxed by several years as chief justice of the state's highest court. He was a kinsman of Dwight, and for that reason probably took more than the usual interest in the talented, impetuous boy. Mitchell himself had been in college during the war years, having graduated in 1763. As an undergraduate he too had almost fallen a victim to the wayward tendencies of the time, but the influence of a classmate had saved him before it was too late. Now as tutor he recognized an opportunity to render a similar service.

Mitchell perceived that his young cousin was headed for a fall, as he himself had been. Although Dwight had not sunk into actual vice, he was neglecting his studies for a fascinating amusement. It was a futile waste of opportunities, and there was the danger that it might lead to something worse. Accordingly, one day when Tutor Mitchell encountered Dwight on the walk, he administered a sharp rebuke to his pupil. This so irritated the young man that he angrily hurried away without granting Mr. Mitchell the respectful compliments customarily due an officer of the college. Mitchell, of course, could not allow the affair to end in this manner.

He decided upon another, wiser method. He summoned Dwight to his room, where they talked over the whole problem in frank but friendly fashion. This time Mitchell used tact and sympathy. He appealed to various motives apt to carry weight with a conscientious mind, for Dwight was not yet a hardened sinner and the sensibilities inspired by his early training at home were still strong. Mitchell pointed out the mistake his pupil was making in throwing away advantages so frivolously. He expressed confidence in the boy's ability to attain distinction, scholastically and otherwise, if he only would. He showed him the path to take, explaining what his habits of study should be, and warning him against evil companions. Perhaps he also mentioned the disappointment Timothy's parents would feel, if he failed to live up to their expectations. They knew what their son was capable of accomplishing. Mitchell's earnest words had the ring of sincerity because he himself had once been engulfed by a similar experience. He handled the situation with firmness but also with genuine sympathy. This

time he succeeded. No threats, no punishments were necessary. Persuasion accomplished his purpose far more satisfactorily.

Dwight left the interview convinced of the error he had made and clearly seeing ahead the narrow trail from which he had wandered so blindly. At a critical, bewildering spot in the woods, Mitchell pointed out the blazes by clearing away the thickening underbrush. Having regained the proper path, Dwight resolved ever to be on guard lest he lose it again. It was the route along which his parents had taken such pains to start him. He scrambled back to it willingly. Resuming the march toward the summit of the mountain he was climbing, his ascent, hereafter, was as perpendicular as his fall had been precipitous. Tutor Mitchell, a real teacher, deserved the credit.<sup>37</sup>

Under his friendly, intelligent guidance, young Dwight now made a fresh start with a vengeance. The rest of his college experience continues the story of his earlier triumphs. Having wasted the first two years, he set about redeeming the loss with a vigor which carried him to the opposite extreme. At the beginning of his junior year, when he was fifteen years of age, he started the new program. The academic year then ran from late September until the middle of the following August. The college day began with compulsory prayers in the chapel, at four-thirty in the morning during the warm, summer months and, as a special concession, at five-thirty during the cold, winter ones. The changed Timothy was now not content to wait so long to begin his day. Every morning he leaped out of bed an hour before the call to chapel, in order to construe and parse one hundred lines of Homer in the original. As he and Homer became more intimately acquainted, he gradually increased the dose. It was a purely self-imposed task. He had decided to conquer the Greek language, and feared the ordinary academic routine might not enable him to do it to his own satisfaction. He accomplished his purpose. He mastered Homer once and for all. Forty years later when a friend greeted him at breakfast with a line from this poet, Dwight finished the quotation without hesitation. He was still able to recognize spot passages early in the morning, on an empty stomach.<sup>38</sup>

But the physical effect of this exercise proved tragic. Since he arose before dawn, he had to do his work in the feeble flicker of

candlelight. This, combined with the intense application at such an unholy hour, began the ruin of his eyes, which a later, genuinely severe, regimen completed. After a few hundred lines of Homer, Dwight began to feel the pain behind his eyes which was to cause him indescribable suffering throughout his life. At this time he did not even suspect the cause, and, of course, did nothing about it. Yale then, unfortunately, had no staff of physicians, dentists, nurses, and statisticians, housed in their own Gothic cathedral, to guard the health of such youthful enthusiasts as young Dwight. Today, with all this protection, when the students might, with impunity, be enthusiastic at dawn over Greek grammar, they are more likely to be crawling into bed than climbing out of it. This, too, in the age of electricity. The times are sadly twisted.

Dwight's assault upon Homer is but one evidence of his new determination to make the most of his final two years at college. His pursuit of penmanship is equally characteristic. Having made up his mind to write an elegant hand, he went about it in deadly earnest. First, he faced the problem of when to do it, since this also was an idea of his own and not part of the normal curriculum. So energetic was the collegiate day in the eighteenth century that the Yale authorities deemed it wise to provide the zealous undergraduates with a rest period from twelve to two o'clock every afternoon. This is another tradition long since discarded. Dwight disregarded it even then. Not feeling the need of relaxation during his junior year, he devoted these two valuable hours to penmanship. He learned what he could from his instructors. A memorandum book,<sup>39</sup> which he kept at this time, contains, among other jottings, the item: "Paid Mr. Miller for teaching me to write." But the instruction which he received from Mr. Miller<sup>40</sup> and others did not satisfy him. It was too academic because, he noticed, the instructors themselves never actually practiced the methods they taught. Dwight always distrusted mere theories. His was an essentially practical mind. So, as in other matters, he struck out for himself.

He decided that, if he were to develop the kind of hand he wanted, he would have to discover for himself the best method of achieving it. He, therefore, resorted to abundant trial and error. He tested every possible method of holding the pen. He moved his



hand and arm in every approved and disapproved way. He experimented with various makes of pens, grades of paper, and types of ink, foreign and domestic, until he found the one that suited him. Often during the entire two hours he would write laboriously from one to three lines, taking care to form each letter until it satisfied him precisely, and then repeating the process again and again. Eventually, after much labor and experimentation, he got what he wanted. Thereafter, others were loud in praise of his accomplishment. In later years he taught many persons to write well. Young men then came to him in desperation, after previous instructors had failed to improve their illegible scrawls. Dwight would usually succeed where the earlier tutors had failed.<sup>41</sup>

That was his custom. Having gone through the same experience himself and conquered the problem on his own initiative, he knew exactly how to help others solve the difficulties. He spoke from first-hand knowledge after actual trial. This was typical of everything he did. To find out how to do something, he did it himself. If Virgil wrote a great epic poem, Dwight tried it too. If the possibility of domesticating wild strawberries was questioned, he put them in his garden and raised them. This was already becoming his method. Because he had the inexhaustible energy and tenacity to pursue it, it carried him far.

He had an insatiable desire to do everything in the most finished manner. He devoted the same pains to copying musical notes that he did to penmanship. Where he fitted this into his busy schedule is a matter of conjecture. His interest in the subject probably goes back to his early training at home, but it is during his undergraduate days that we first hear of it. As might be expected, he preferred sacred music to all other kinds. During his junior year he began a collection of church music but never finished it, doubtless because of other more pressing duties. His ear was described as "exquisitely discriminating," his voice melodiously rich and strong, easily filling the Yale chapel. In later years he put his own poems to music,<sup>42</sup> and he may have done so now.

His interest in poetry was equally ardent. The exact date of his first strenuous effort along these elevated lines is unknown, but at the time of his death the earliest extant specimens of his poetical compositions were dated 1767.<sup>43</sup> In that year he was at the sensitive



age of fifteen. Although these youthful gropings for the sublime do not display the same genius he manifested in other fields, they must have required time. Where he found that is problematical.

There were other things to do. He watched the progress of current affairs by taking the *Boston Chronicle*. Having struggled with Homer before dawn, he felt justified in relaxing at a later hour with the lighter essays of the *Rambler* and *Tatler*. On one occasion his Yankee instinct for a good bargain enabled him to swap a copy of the former, which he had read, for one of the latter, which he had not read, and make a profit of two shillings in the process. He recorded the deal with a tone of triumph.<sup>44</sup> His sound business sense was always to stand him in good stead. No doubt for a legitimate purpose, he bought limes by the dozen but lemons individually or in pairs, spreading his purchases impartially at various stores, let us hope not for reasons of credit.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps in the interest of hospitality, the limes helped to stimulate conversation when visitors called for a social chat, although these sessions now probably took a sober form, and certainly were never allowed to interfere with his regular studies.

A note in his college memorandum book, dated February 22, 1768, states, without further comment, the bare fact that "J. Hamlin <sup>46</sup> says he hates me like the devil's hating a Christian." Why, we have no way of telling. But this animosity on the part of a fellow student must have been food for serious thought and discussion. Other notations made the same year indicate that perhaps it was literally a case of the devil hating a Christian. In his reading, Dwight noticed a few noble gems which he considered worth preserving. He took from the *World* this significant item: "Men are more likely to be praised into Virtue than aided out of Vice." Again, from an unknown source, or perhaps it was his own: "All the labour of men is to promote their happiness. And the notion of doing good is entirely explained by contributions to the happiness of ourselves and fellow creatures." If, having himself been recently rescued from iniquity, young Dwight was then attempting to praise young Hamlin out of vice and into virtue, for the sake of adding to the happiness of the world, Hamlin apparently rejected his good offices flatly.

Timothy did not despond. He now had a remedy for the dis-

couragement of failure. Another quotation, this time from the *Rambler* and noted only a few days after Mr. Hamlin's frank statement, contained a maxim which, henceforth, Dwight made a rule of life: "Employment is the best relief to melancholy."<sup>47</sup> Certainly, if Dwight dreaded melancholy, he never, for the rest of his days, allowed himself a spare moment in which to fall a prey to it.

He avoided blind alleys and concentrated tenaciously upon the main business at hand. During his junior and senior years, he worked fourteen hours every day as regularly as the clock ticked off the minutes. His industry and ability, his determination to succeed more thoroughly than he had previously failed, brought its reward. He soon ranked among the first scholars in his class. When the time came to receive his well merited bachelor's degree, in September, 1769, he shared the highest position with only one other. Valedictory honors, in the form of "appointments" to a part in the Commencement exercises, were given on the basis of scholastic distinction. To bestow those coveted prizes without wounding sensitive hearts and causing controversy, was a delicate, almost hopeless, task. This year the faculty found it particularly difficult. Dwight and Nathan Strong, who later became eminent as pastor of the First Church at Hartford, were tied for first place. As far as scholarship was concerned, it was impossible to choose between them. Yet, both could not have the privilege of privileges, the right to deliver the Latin Oration. The resourceful President finally summoned the two youths to his office, where he explained that the faculty considered them each at the head of the class and equally deserving of the place of honor. But, since Strong was the elder, they had decided to grant it to him at this time, and when the class took their master's degrees, it would go to Dwight. It was a neat solution which apparently satisfied every one.<sup>48</sup>

Although Timothy's appearance upon the Commencement platform was thus postponed, his sartorial preparations for the ceremonies had been causing parental alarm for several months. As early as January 6, 1769, a New Haven newspaper announced that the senior class at Yale College had unanimously agreed to appear at their graduation attired "wholly in the manufactures of our own Country." With wise foresight, the young men allowed plenty of time for parents and friends to co-operate in providing "Home-

spun Cloaths" before the great event in September. They wished none of their number to be compelled, at the last moment, to wear the customary British importations and thus be forced into the "hard Necessity of unfashionable Singularity." Contrary to the newspaper report, there had apparently been three or four dissenters whose objections the majority had swiftly swept aside. The seniors' patriotic decision was a minor but significant manifestation of the growing colonial opposition to British imperial policy. The Townshend Acts had revived the nonimportation agreements. Troops quartered in Boston were proving a troublesome source of friction. As grievances accumulated, the Yale seniors saw an opportunity to display their fervor for the cause of freedom.<sup>49</sup>

Timothy joined the movement wholeheartedly but experienced the common difficulty in carrying out the class resolution. All the necessary articles had to have pure American pedigrees. It was not easy. His father reacted unenthusiastically to a request for a home-made "dress." With eight other children already making demands upon the paternal pocketbook, Major Dwight told his eldest son that this project would be a needless expense because none of the class would ever wear the costume after the Commencement show was over. Indeed, he knew of no lawn, muslin, or "Cambricke" spinners or weavers in the neighborhood of Northampton sufficiently skilled to provide Timothy with what he wanted. However, he conceded it might be possible to get shoe and knee buckles. He also promised to send stockings, "if they can be got ready," and indicated that Timothy might expect "stuff" for a coat and gown. The previous year Timothy had recorded in his expense account the impressive item nineteen shillings sixpence for silver shoe "bucklers." They must have been made abroad, for patriotism now evidently demanded others. Presumably, on the momentous day when he received his degree he was "fashionably" clad like his fellows. We are told by a classmate that they took pride in their "plain coarse republican dress," and were much applauded "by the friends of Liberty."<sup>50</sup>

These fleeting glimpses of Timothy's final days at college are refreshing because they suggest not only that he was aware of the portentous events then occurring in his country, but also that this intensely studious young man had a normal side to his last two



years at Yale. Strenuous though they seem, those years were certainly to him far more joyous than his first two had been. He had found, in incessant work, the solution to melancholy and temptation. He had learned the way to virtuous happiness, his own and that of others. After one mistake, he had felt the exhilaration of real accomplishment, and was eager for more worlds to conquer. He was bristling with Calvinistic armament. Perhaps at Commencement, the pocket of his homemade "dress" bulged with the seventeen guineas his father gave him—one for each of his seventeen years. The gift came as an appreciation for the brilliant record the boy had made. But it was a start, too, now that he would be on his own. He never asked for more. With seventeen guineas and a well trained Yankee mind, Timothy Dwight was fully equipped for whatever might come next.<sup>51</sup>

## CHAPTER II

### Tutor at Yale

FOR TWO MORE years he was content to feel his way. Except for occasional visits to Northampton, he remained hard at work in New Haven, studying at Yale as a resident graduate and supporting himself by teaching school.<sup>1</sup> Taking a grammar school was the accepted method by which young men fresh from college earned a little daily bread until something better turned up. Dwight regarded it as a temporary expedient, but in his case it proved to be something more.

He discovered that he liked the business. On the opening day when he first faced the critical appraisal of a juvenile audience, he probably controlled the situation more confidently than most new teachers of seventeen. From the start he seems to have had the respect of his charges. As they came to know him better, he rapidly won their affection. Parents as well as pupils developed a liking for this enthusiastic young schoolmaster. Drilling small children in spelling and arithmetic was not then considered an art requiring much genius, but Dwight's immediate success at it was significant. He found that he enjoyed stimulating and guiding young minds, and that he had a natural aptitude for it. His first brief experience was prophetic of the future.

He attacked the various tasks at hand with a seriousness of purpose which no distractions could weaken. He had much to do and only twenty-four hours a day into which to cram it all. That required method and a fixed routine. Already accustomed to a working day of fourteen hours, he allotted six hours to his pupils and eight to his own studies. That left ten which had to be filled with such unfortunate impediments as meals, exercise, and sleep. He adhered faithfully to his schedule, for he was too intent upon his own

progress to be diverted by any enticements of the local social whirl. New Haven, a town of three or four thousand people, was not then noted for urbane drawing rooms presided over by charming ladies of the world who had little else to do. If such there were, the serious young schoolteacher felt no ambition to scintillate in gay surroundings.

His place was in the classroom and his own study. He was well rid of trivial amusements. No card game could distract him now. He had learned to chart a course and stay on it. Still undecided as to his life's work, he was not yet certain of his ultimate destination. But he was on the way, and he did not intend it to be a mere cruise of aimless drifting along a coast full of pleasant inlets. He was bound for a major port. There was still time to decide which one. Meanwhile, he knew that he must navigate skillfully the waters immediately ahead. If that meant long, hard hours of concentrated effort, so much the better. "Employment" was the best relief for melancholy.<sup>2</sup>

Reward came at Commencement, September, 1771, when he received an appointment as tutor in his alma mater. Then only nineteen, Dwight found that he was younger than most of the class over which he had to preside. Pupils of ten had been one thing. Undergraduates of twenty were quite another. Dwight faced the situation undismayed, and overcame the handicap of age by firmness, energy, and tact. There could be no doubt of his ability. His teaching was inspiring. He soon had the confidence of seniors as well as freshmen. Students and faculty alike came to look upon him with a respect usually granted only to those much older in experience and wisdom.

Particularly in matters of discipline, he displayed a skill unsurpassed by any of his colleagues. President Daggett himself acknowledged the promising young tutor's superiority. When Clap had retired in 1766, Dr. Naphtali Daggett, then Professor of Divinity, had become acting president of the college; and he continued to preside over the institution until 1777. Dr. Daggett was a gentleman of great learning who served the college well. A scholar rather than an administrator, he was by nature better fitted for the chair of divinity than for the presidency. The kindly pastor was at ease with books but was made uncomfortable by the bewildering antics



of exuberant youth. Riots, vandalism, sometimes even gunplay, made student life in that robust era turbulent. The management of such boisterous young animals was work for which Dr. Daggett simply was not suited. Fully conscious of his own weakness as a disciplinarian, he willingly shared these harassing duties with others. In Dwight, particularly, he recognized the qualities which he himself lacked.

The President gradually turned over much of the actual supervision of the students until Dwight came to perform the function of a modern dean, although that office did not then exist. During the six years of his tutorship, he, therefore, had a much larger share in the government of the college than usually fell to one of his years and rank. He seemed to know instinctively how to inspire the timid with confidence as well as how to suppress the roisterers. He filled hardened offenders with lasting remorse for their misdeeds, making them feel the disgrace which their crude pranks brought upon their families and the college as well as upon themselves. No tutor could paint a more vivid or convincing picture of the anguish caused in anxious parents by an undutiful son. Dwight thus gained a thorough initiation into all the problems of discipline which plague peace-loving academicians. It was an arduous but vital part of college administration, and his success in it produced, even then, the prediction that he would one day be president of the institution. At the moment, his youth kept this goal in the realm of pleasant prophecy, but every year it became more and more of a possibility.<sup>3</sup>

He made his qualifications further apparent by his initiative and by his energetic willingness to try new things for the sake of improvement. Dwight belonged to a group of unusually able tutors who made President Daggett's administration a notable period in the history of the college.<sup>4</sup> Up to this time the curriculum had remained practically unchanged since the founding of the institution. It emphasized the learned languages, theology, logic, and mathematics. This was deemed the only "Solid Learning" worthy of respect. President Clap had been proficient in these departments, and particularly interested in Hebrew, geometry, and astronomy. His successor continued to maintain the high standard he had set, but there now arose a movement to inject new life into the ponderous course of study.

It originated with three young tutors, who served under President Daggett—Joseph Howe, John Trumbull, and Timothy Dwight. They were intimate friends with mutually congenial literary inclinations. In taking stock of what the educational system of the day offered, they agreed that its greatest weakness was a contempt for belles lettres. They determined to try, at Yale, to remedy this defect. Contrary to prevailing contemporary opinion, they believed that the study of literature was not folly, and that a place in the curriculum should be made for it.

Tutors were more or less transient inhabitants of the academic community because they were usually recent graduates who were preparing for some other profession. But these three together exercised an influence over a long enough period to make a real impression. Howe served for three years from 1769 to 1772, and then departed to become pastor of the New South Church in Boston.<sup>5</sup> His two friends joined the faculty in the autumn of 1771. Trumbull stayed two years before venturing into law. Dwight remained for six before the roll of drums and roar of cannon called him to a more strenuous field of action. Howe was the first to take up the fight, but Trumbull and Dwight gave the movement an impetus so vigorous that it soon swept aside opposition.

Those two made a splendid team. John Trumbull had behind him a record for precocity which shows what kindred spirits he and Dwight were. Trumbull's mother had a better education than most women of her day. Proud of this superiority, she wanted her son to excel in the same way. She taught him to read when he was only two. Before he was four, according to his own account, he had sped through the entire Bible, which is more than many do today at any age. His delicate health compelled him to avoid the usual strenuous boyish occupations in favor of this abnormal literacy. Fortunately, he had a taste for it.

Fresh from his biblical triumph, John Trumbull began to learn Latin by eavesdropping while his father instructed a boy of seventeen who was then in the household preparing for college. That dreary labor included memorizing the Latin accidence and Lilly's *Grammar*, although a translation was permitted to ease the travail of construing the *Select Colloquies* of Corderius. These forbidding matters became literally child's play for frail little John Trumbull,

aged five. Wandering innocently into the recitation room, he would remain there unnoticed by his busy father. Lest his real purpose be detected, he depended solely upon his memory to retain what he overheard. This was hardly a handicap. His mind seemed to be a permanent receptacle for the most casual and fleeting observations. He was soon accomplishing secretly what the older lad had difficulty doing openly.

When John's father discovered why his small son lingered so willingly in the presence of such arduous activity, there were no attempts at unhealthy repression. Henceforth John occupied a seat as a recognized member of a strangely unbalanced class. When the time came for his older companion to leap the final hurdles leading into Yale, John journeyed to New Haven too. After carefully examining the two candidates, the learned faculty admitted both boys to full membership in the entering class. Since, at that moment, John had covered only the first seven years and five months of his allotted span on earth, his parents kept him at home for another six years, straining at the leash.

He passed the time in private reading, burrowing deeper into the Latin and Greek authors usually studied at Yale, but simultaneously developing a liking for more modern writers. He commandeered every book he could find, although the resources of his native village were meager. In addition to Homer, Horace, and Cicero, he managed to get hold of *Paradise Lost*, Thomson's *Seasons*, much of Dryden and Pope, and, be it particularly noted, *The Spectator*. He memorized large slices of the works of the English poets, and, inspired by their example, composed verses of his own. Having attained the mellow maturity of thirteen, he became a freshman at Yale. During his undergraduate days, in spite of the classics and mathematics, he continued to indulge his early taste for poetry. Following his graduation in 1767, he remained in residence at the college for three years as the Berkeley scholar. His time was then his own, and he devoted it largely to English literature. He did not neglect the Greek and Latin poets and orators, but studied them for grace of style and literary artistry. Rules of grammar did not interest him.<sup>8</sup>

This background qualified Trumbull to speak effectively for the cause in which he and his colleague, Dwight, believed. Having



soaked himself in the satires of such widely separated masters as Juvenal and Swift,<sup>7</sup> Trumbull adopted their method. During the first year of his tutorship, he composed Part One of his poem, *The Progress of Dulness, Or the Rare Adventures of Tom Brainless*.<sup>8</sup> In this, his avowed purpose was to point out the "errors that hinder the advantages of education and the growth of piety." He satirized the prevailing course of collegiate instruction, and suggested changes. He argued that a knowledge of the learned languages was of little or no benefit to a young man about to plunge into business or a profession. For a devil-take-the-hindmost world, Trumbull thought it would be to the point for the beginner to be able to use his own language skillfully. He ridiculed the system which buried a student in a dictionary searching for the words of a language long dead, and failed to teach him the one he needed daily. He agreed that an appreciation of the beauties in the classics was desirable, provided the lessons learned were applied to contemporary vernacular. "Pedant-pride" disgusted him.<sup>9</sup>

He shifted the emphasis from the deceased to the living, urging the teaching of oratory, English grammar, composition, and the cultivation of an effective style. He himself was planning to be a lawyer, and must have felt the need for this sort of preparation as he looked forward to future battles in the courtroom. Howe had a similar motive. Intent upon the ministry, he was facing the very real problem of delivering polished sermons from a pulpit, to say nothing of soothing the factional strife of a congregation. Dwight, hesitating between law and theology, was investigating both. Theirs was a practical rather than a purely intellectual view.

Their purpose was not to exclude the classics, mathematics, or metaphysics, but to make room for belles lettres. They considered it a field of equal importance which had been long and erroneously neglected. Their immediate problem was to arouse the interest of the students. Biased in the manner for which juvenile masculine minds are notorious, Yale men had always looked with suspicion upon such subjects as poetry and rhetoric. In these flowery fields they sniffed a perfume of femininity; they preferred more virile hunting grounds. Their taste in such matters had long been primitive, and nothing had been done to improve it. At last the three tutors set about rectifying the situation.

They were all recent graduates no older than many of their students. The risk of ridicule was potent, for they were rowing against both wind and tide. It took stout hearts to begin what promised to be a rough voyage. But Trumbull and Dwight, bright young men with similar backgrounds and tastes, made a formidable pair of champions for the cause of "polite" literature at Yale. At the beginning they labored together. After Trumbull's departure, Dwight carried on with enthusiasm. He served as a tutor much longer than was common, and the responsibility for winning the objective was chiefly his.

He had to operate outside the regular classroom routine. Recitations in the established studies went on as usual. But, after hours, Dwight did something which had not been done before at Yale. He delivered a series of lectures on style and composition, and his effort met with hearty undergraduate approval. Students came in numbers, listening eagerly to his literary discussions. Not satisfied with the lecture method alone, Dwight tried others with equally good results.

He urged the students themselves to see what they could do. During his own undergraduate days, according to a close friend in his class,<sup>10</sup> a small group had voluntarily undertaken to initiate themselves into the art of elocution. At private meetings, one or two evenings a week, each member delivered a speech "about the length of a declamation." When he had finished, the others criticized his performance—pronunciation, gestures, and all. It was done with mutual sympathy and necessarily within the limits of their inexperience. For more mature guidance they purchased Ward's *System of Oratory*, and Tutor Mitchell had often dropped in to correct and encourage their efforts. The names of the dozen members are now lost, but there can be little doubt that Dwight was among them. Now, as tutor, he adopted their method.

Meeting the students informally, he patiently heard them read their compositions. By friendly counsel he tried to cure their faults and instill correct principles of criticism. He mounted the stage himself, and pronounced to them the kind of oration he wanted them to deliver. He listened with genuine interest while they strove to equal his skill, before an audience of fellow critics.<sup>11</sup> Thus teaching by example, Dwight made his instruction practical as well as

theoretical. When he himself had labored for perfection in penmanship, he had learned the value of actual trial and error. For him experience had been the best teacher. He sought to introduce as much of it as possible into his teaching.

His students responded with gratifying eagerness. Nathan Hale and Benjamin Tallmadge, upper-classmen during Dwight's first two years as tutor, seem to have been among those who felt the new literary breezes. Although both resided at college, they entered into a correspondence, imitating the best of antiquity's epistolary masters. The purpose being self-improvement, they indulged in mutual criticism of the talent each displayed in the exchange of letters. In one effusion, which was probably typical, Tallmadge informed Hale:

In my delightful retirement from the fruitless Bustle of the noisy, with my usual Delight, &, perhaps, with more than common attention, I perused your Epistle—Replete as it was with Sentiments worthy to be contemplated, let me assure you with the strongest confidence of an affectionate Friend, that with nothing was my Pleasure so greatly heightened, as with your curious remarks upon my preceding Performance, which, so far from carrying the appearance of a censuring Critick's empty amusement, seemed to me to be wholly the result of unspotted regard & (as I may say) fraternal esteem.<sup>12</sup>

After this brave beginning, he went on to defend himself, at length, against his friend's criticisms. If we allow for the eighteenth century emphasis upon elegant formality, Tallmadge's pomposity indicates that Dwight was sowing seed where badly needed. Happily the ground was fertile.

Ebenezer Fitch of the class of 1777, later president of Williams College, was another product of the new culture. His tutor offered "a valuable book" as a prize for the best composition. It was a subtle method of improving their writing. Young Fitch entered this "trial of genius" with enthusiasm. Outside the hours devoted to classical studies, he labored over his contribution for a whole week. Industry paid. He won the award, but noted the honor in his diary with becoming humility.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, he did not record the name of the tutor who thus stimulated latent talent. It may have been Dwight, for he was not above such pedagogical technique. On other occasions he used it with good effect.



Certainly one document, which has survived destruction for a century and a half, indicates clearly Dwight's success as a teacher. It was a petition presented by the seniors to the Yale Corporation one October. The class as a body asked permission "to hire" Mr. Dwight to instruct them that year in rhetoric, history, and belles lettres, in addition to the usual subjects. The Corporation gave the matter due consideration. Finally, being "willing to encourage the improvement of the youth in those branches of polite literature," they decided to grant the request but stipulated that it must be done only with the approval of the parents or guardians of the students.<sup>14</sup> The Corporation, an august body of clergymen without zeal for reform, stepped toward innovation cautiously. Dwight's instruction in the new subjects had to remain outside the customary scheme of study. But he was preparing the way for their eventual adoption as part of the regular curriculum.

Meanwhile, lacking recognized respectability, these studies had to be achieved privately. This merely added to their interest. It seemed an opportunity to be seized while available. Hardened seniors, in their last gay year at college, begged for the privilege of hiring Mr. Dwight for additional instruction in poetry and polite literature, matters hitherto considered soft and effeminate. No testimony could speak more eloquently of Dwight's inspiring power over rough youth.

One reason for this popularity was the fact that he himself had a boundless enthusiasm for the things he was teaching. He was a young genius excitedly trying new wings in the pleasant atmosphere of literary fancy. He was creating and teaching simultaneously. At this time he and Trumbull collaborated on a series of miscellaneous essays written in the manner of the *Spectator*, and got them published in the *Boston Chronicle*, in successive issues over a period of months. They followed this with a longer but equally lighthearted set printed in a New Haven weekly.<sup>15</sup> While Trumbull was busy composing his sprightly *Progress of Dulness*, Dwight, in a more sober mood, was bending laboriously over his gigantic epic, *The Conquest of Canaan*. Poetry was churning about in his ever active mind. His enthusiasm for it was so contagious that the most virile students succumbed. Forgetting their former hostility, they began to read it; and, better still, they tried their own

hands at it, happily confident of their newly inspired powers. Dwight disliked mere dilettantism. He drove deeper, and sought to arouse the sleeping urge to create. At Yale, the long neglected Muses suddenly encountered a reception which must have been flattering but bewildering.

Lyric and heroic poetry, rhetoric, composition, elocution—all that was included in a liberal definition of “belles lettres” at last came into its own. If it had to be done unofficially, outside the regular course of study, so much the better. The interest aroused was more genuine. Howe, Trumbull, and Dwight not only broadened the available curriculum, but created a new and richer intellectual life in their alma mater. They altered the prevailing taste and, at this early date, led a movement which, after the Revolution, was to urge cultural as well as political independence for America. The early 1770’s justly form a distinct era in the history of Yale. Dwight played his part effectively for six of those memorable years.<sup>16</sup>

Far from neglecting the older subjects, he went beyond the routine requirements in those departments. His students always found him more than faithful in his duty to them. With his usual diligence he applied himself to the Greek and Roman classics. At one period his interest in mathematics became so absorbing that he laid aside his poetical pursuits and surrendered unconditionally to the fascination of Newtonian mechanics. Three times or more, he plowed a straight, lone course through the demonstrations in Sir Isaac’s monumental *Principia*. Two or three of the problems bothered him, but he conquered all the rest, which was accomplishment enough for a youth in his early twenties. The fact that Newton himself had presented his own works to the Yale library must have added zest to the young tutor’s labors.<sup>17</sup> Since Dwight was devoting his own studies to the higher branches not included in the ordinary course of instruction, he led his class beyond the customary mathematical studies through Spherics and Fluxions, and into Newton as far as any dared to follow. Probably few had the courage to match his brisk pace for long.

They dug into Algebra too. This was then new at Yale, having been introduced near the close of President Clap’s administration. Dwight viewed it as one of the stupendous monuments of human

genius, and accordingly paid it due honor. In fact his interest in all matters mathematical was so keen at this time that he felt a strong desire to do nothing else. He labored over a difficult equation with as much ardor as he had previously lavished upon the cadences of *The Conquest of Canaan*. He neglected his favorite Muse with shameful abandon, and when he eventually attempted to return to his old love, he found the process of reconciliation difficult. In later years he acknowledged that he could have cheerfully devoted his life to solving one mathematical problem after another. His was the age of Newtonianism. He bathed in that deep pool with an eager relish and found it refreshing. For his later thought, this was significant.<sup>18</sup>

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Although his strokes were strong and his zeal insatiable, Dwight swam at a speed which consumed even his indomitable energy. In addition to all his literary and teaching activities, inside and outside the customary routine, he steadily increased the severity of his own studies. To accomplish all that he wanted to do, he continued the old habit of working by candlelight, long before dawn and late at night. Allowing himself a grand total of four hours' sleep out of every twenty-four, and none for exercise, he begrudged the minutes necessary for meals. In the interest of health, however, he contrived to interrupt his busy schedule long enough to be inoculated for smallpox. As the disease affected him mildly, he impatiently resumed his arduous grind before he had completely recovered. Under such treatment his eyes failed to prosper. Unaware that they were being in the least abused, he hit upon a scheme which completed their ruin and nearly wrecked the rest of him.<sup>19</sup>

In the second year of his tutorship, he decided to counterbalance his abstinence from physical exercise by limiting his diet. His happy thought was that this would enable him to avoid mental dullness, and simultaneously obtain a few more precious minutes for the intellectual pursuits in which he engaged so impetuously. He began with a general reduction in the quantity of food he usually consumed. After experimenting for six months, he was dissatisfied because he still failed to find the "clearness of apprehension" after dinner which he had possessed before it. He, therefore, restricted



that meal to exactly twelve mouthfuls. For the next six months he gave this system an opportunity to prove its worth as an intellectual stimulus. Although an improvement, it was not a complete success. So, for the following six months, he omitted meat, and dined on twelve mouthfuls of vegetables, usually potatoes.

It is safe to say that Timothy Dwight lacked the instincts of an epicure. In a gormandizing era when gout was fashionably prevalent, no one with a real interest in food could have seated himself at a table, methodically counted out a dinner of precisely one dozen mouthfuls, and then rushed away to grapple with the laws of gravitation. Things of the intellect alone enthralled Dwight. Towards breakfast and supper also his attitude was uncompromisingly sparing. This may have been why, during those eighteen months of gradual starvation, he slowly drifted away from things poetical to affairs mathematical. Contrary to the conventional presumption which usually associates romantic lyrics with an empty stomach, Newtonian mathematics seems, in his case, to have been better suited to that sublime state. Intellectually, Dwight thrived on this regimen; but, physically, it did him no good.

So soon as the end of the first twelve months, he himself began to notice a change for the worse, although even then he searched in vain for the cause. Eyesight, appetite, and general health oddly failed him all at once. Upon proper medical advice, he submitted himself to daily doses of a substance optimistically known as "Elixir Vitriol." It was months before Dwight lost confidence in it. Unfortunately, the vitriolic elements in this promising remedy proved stronger than its power as an elixir. Instead of prolonging life indefinitely, it produced painfully distressing attacks of "bilious colic." During the summer term Dwight experienced twenty particularly violent visitations of this tormenting affliction. In September came Commencement and a welcome vacation.

He returned from this respite only to renew during the next winter the same severe regimen with its ascetic diet and rigorous schedule of study from before dawn until midnight. The bilious colic reappeared with added ferocity and frequency. His eyes finally refused to do more. He could read nothing, not even a comforting chapter in his Bible, without causing an alarming dimness and a pain which then stayed with him the rest of the day. Indeed,

for the next two years his eyes remained in this tragic condition. Faced with the prospect of complete blindness, he began to lose not only his energy but his resolution. He lamented that he had not adopted the life of a farmer rather than that of a student. He lost faith in the Elixir Vitriol. He became so emaciated, so utterly reduced in health, strength, and spirits that death itself seemed to be creeping over him.

His friends persuaded him to desist temporarily from his studies, but they finally became so alarmed that they summoned his father. In March, 1774, Major Dwight hastened to New Haven, and was dismayed by the ravages his son's self-imposed regimen had inflicted upon him. It was obviously impossible for the earnest young tutor to continue any longer. With lumps in their throats, friends and pupils said farewell as for the last time. Father and son headed their horses for Northampton. Never the easiest of trips, they accomplished it this time with the greatest difficulty. Although not normally despondent, Dwight himself gave up hope of ever recovering. He seemed to be going home only to die.

Gloomy though the prospect was, he fought desperately for life. For two months after his return to Northampton, he continued to suffer intensely. After administering to his immediate needs, a physician prescribed a program which seems, to modern eyes, little less strenuous than the one he now renounced. Our hero (who would deny him the distinction?) now dosed himself with "Hull's Colic Powder," a medicine composed of aloes and a large proportion of various aromatics and spices. More inviting was the "free use" of Madeira wine. For three months he drank one bottle daily. The wine, it is interesting to note, produced no "flushings of the face" nor any "heat on the skin." It was credited with lessening the frequency of the pulse and, at the same time, raising it to something like a healthy standard in force and fulness.

The doctor also decreed a vigorous course of physical exercise as the only means of restoring his constitution to its original vigor. Fully reconciled to obeying orders, the sick man walked six miles daily and rode his horse over eight. It took courage to keep at such a program day after day, but he persevered in this new schedule as faithfully as in the one which had been his undoing. At the end of three months the paroxysms of colic ceased. He was sufficiently

encouraged to reduce the dose of wine to a pint per day but kept this up for seven months. A small pill of butternut extract daily was also part of the cure throughout this critical period. A recent addition to medical science, it was made by boiling down the inner bark of the butternut tree, which was plentiful in America. It was, therefore, a domestic medicine easily obtainable at little expense. The eminent Dr. Benjamin Rush used it, and Dr. James Thacher considered it "a highly important discovery, and valuable addition to our *materia medica*." <sup>20</sup>

Thus aided by the most advanced medical knowledge, Dwight's strength slowly returned until he was gradually able to increase his exercise. He walked from eight to eleven miles and rode horseback about the same distance every day, six days a week. During the fourteen months which followed his return to Northampton, he covered between two and three thousand miles on foot, and as many more in the saddle. His journeys took him as far as Philadelphia, and to Portland and back. He allowed only heavy rain to interfere with these jaunts through the countryside. Persistence accomplished his purpose. At last health returned. It was a hard struggle and a close call. He had good reason to believe that benign Providence had watched over him. For that he was always grateful.

The experience left its scars in body and in mind. His eyes never recovered from the maltreatment they had received. They had once been so strong, we are told, that he could "look for some length of time at the sun at mid-day." Perhaps this further accounts for their undoing. Now for two years he was unable to use them at all, and had to lay aside his studies. Gradually, as his general health improved, he found that by dividing his work into small portions he could write and read as much as two hours a day. Writing was always easier for him than reading. For the latter he ever afterwards remained largely dependent upon others. But he was able to manage six hours of daily teaching. Bathing his eyes in cold water, morning and evening, gave him some relief, and taking snuff seemed to help. Still, he was never again able to use them by candle-light, or before breakfast on an empty stomach. For the rest of his life he suffered from this self-inflicted handicap. It might well have been overwhelming, but Dwight regarded it as merely another



obstacle to be overcome. Ever present, it acted as one of the most important influences upon his life.

Dwight himself later looked back upon the failure of his eyes as a kind event within God's providence. He thought it had helped to save his life by preventing him from further overwork and by compelling him to renounce everything for the sake of regaining his general health. The permanent weakness of his eyes altered his habits in ways which brought certain compensating results. Being dependent upon others for most of his reading, he henceforth acquired less knowledge from books and more from his own observations and reflections. He became willing to devote much time to social intercourse. A brilliant conversationalist himself, he delighted in good company. Since he made friends easily, he drew information, if any was to be had, from every person whom he met. For him conversation became not merely a matter of sociability, but the means of improving his own mind. Later he often repeated his belief that "the most useful sentiments concerning human life" must be drawn not from books or speculation, but from life. To Dwight, the fruit of actual observation was "real knowledge."<sup>21</sup> Ruined eyes did not prevent him from mixing with the world and learning what he wanted to know.

Henceforth, he was no scholarly recluse buried in books and meditation. In this he differed from many contemporaries in the profession he was about to enter. His friend the Reverend Charles Backus, for example, habitually shut himself in his study for a working day of from fifteen to eighteen hours. There he frequently became so lost in thought that, oblivious to all about him, he would sit stirring the fire with a pair of tongs until there was no more fire to stir. When the cold became uncomfortable, he would arouse himself sufficiently to summon his wife, who, after reviving the dying embers, left him in peace until he called her again to repeat the process. Otherwise, she was seldom disturbed in her monopoly of the domestic management.<sup>22</sup> The Reverend Nathanael Emmons, another eminent theological thinker of the time, spent most of the fifty-four years of his ministry in his study, where, guarded against intruders by a sturdy hook on the door, he paced up and down, wearing a well defined path in the floor boards as he reconciled Calvinistic dogma or pondered Unitarian error.<sup>23</sup>

The children of the Reverend Moses Stuart, famed biblical scholar of Andover Theological Seminary, well understood that their father was never to be disturbed when in his sacred sanctuary. No matter who came or what happened, they dared not violate that privacy. They waited dutifully through the week until the strict Puritan Sabbath brought an opportunity for an hour with him. On that day the learned professor rested from his scholarly labors. Emerging from his retreat to attend meeting, he at last gave his sons and daughters their chance to tell him what they had been doing, to pester him with questions, and to know him as a father rather than the studious inhabitant of a mysterious region whose door they never dreamed of opening.<sup>24</sup>

With Dwight the situation had to be different. It was physically impossible for him to spend fifteen hours a day deciphering Aramaic documents or digesting abstruse metaphysical treatises. His feeble eyes compelled him to persuade others to tell him about their scholarly investigations. In the search for truth he had to rely chiefly upon his own common sense. Yet, he somehow accomplished a prodigious amount of reading. Less "learned," perhaps, than some of his more secluded brethren, he was always independent in thought and often far better acquainted with the ways of the world than they.

The collapse of his health affected him in another, more profound way. It brought him closer to death than he had ever been before. Trained as he was in the Calvinism of the day, this was a subject he could not escape, and it must have been frequently in his thoughts. His maternal grandparents had died when he was still too young for it to impress him deeply. But no doubt he heard it mentioned many times. The death of his paternal grandfather, Colonel Dwight, the respected first citizen of Northampton, whom he had known from boyhood, occurred in 1771, the first year of Dwight's tutorship at Yale. The young man must have felt this keenly. Now, before he was twenty-five, he himself had been on the verge of a premature grave. For months he had felt life slipping slowly from him. Once he had lost hope of keeping it, but he did not give up the struggle. Under poignant circumstances he had faced the most solemn of all mysteries. Fortunately, he was not without a solution.

It was apparently in January, 1774,<sup>25</sup> after his self-imposed regimen had nearly completed its work of devastation, that he joined the college church. This meant that he had become a "Christian," the most profound religious experience which he could have in this mortal world. According to the practice of the time, it indicated that he had reason to believe that God, through the Holy Ghost, had granted him "renewing grace." Divine mercy had bestowed upon a depraved sinner a "new heart" which gave him the ability, sincerely and devoutly, to love God. Henceforth, the creature sought to obey the Creator's commandments, not from fear of everlasting punishment, but purely for the glory and love of a benevolent Master. As testimony to the genuineness of his belief that this vital transformation had come over him, Dwight had to make a public profession of his faith, not an easy thing to do before a crowded meetinghouse. He was then granted formal admittance as a "member" of the "church" in full communion. This was the select body of those who had been similarly blessed. To Dwight it was the most serious, the most important event in his life, almost the answer to death itself.

This whole experience, his admission to the church at the very time when death seemed to be overtaking him, his desperate struggle back to health, the ever present prospect of blindness, all formed an influence which cast a strong shadow over his entire later thought and conduct. In his own mind, in his prayers, in his daily conversation, he returned to it, consciously and unconsciously, again and again. Henceforth, he viewed the Calvinistic cosmology from the point of vantage which this vivid experience gave him. It furnished him with a different approach from that of a pure metaphysician who saw it only from a path in the floor boards behind a locked library door.

After months of walking and riding, after quantities of Madeira wine and butternut extract, with the impressions of his ordeal fresh in his mind, Dwight was finally able to resume his duties at Yale with his old energy. Except for his eyes, he returned sound of body and considerably mellowed in spirit. Reverently aware of the constant nearness of death and the necessity of always being ready for it, he now guarded his health as carefully as he had previously been reckless of it. He ate the food he needed, and allowed nothing to



interfere with his regular exercise. Methodical habits and a naturally vigorous constitution enabled him to enjoy a life of enormous effort and labor.

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The remainder of his tutorship fell during stirring days of national importance. On Friday April 21, 1775, a sophomore at the college scribbled this revealing entry into his diary:

Today tidings of the battle of Lexington, which is the first engagement with the British troops, arrived at New Haven. This filled the country with alarm, and rendered it impossible for us to pursue our studies to any profit.<sup>26</sup>

Another student unhesitatingly deserted his books and rushed off that very night for the front. Others went home the next day. The situation seemed so alarming that the faculty ended the term on the following Monday, two weeks before the regular vacation.

The students reassembled the 30th of May with feeling running high. They had already forsworn tea drinking until the tax should be repealed. Now the sophomore class heard rumors that one of their number was guilty of holding opinions "unfriendly to the just Liberties and Privileges of America." A class committee invited the suspected one to appear before them to dispel the slander, if such it were. The young die-hard, named Abiathar Camp, Jr., saw fit to remain aloof, and allowed the invitation to pass unheeded. The committee met his contemptuous silence by sending him a request to meet them "tomorrow afternoon" at a specified time, warning him that, if he failed, they would consider the reports about him true. This time Abiathar did not fail them. He sent a curt reply, the sarcasm of which could not be misinterpreted. The committee correctly thought it insulting.

Whereupon, another committee, representing the entire student body, examined the evidence against the brazen Tory and found him guilty of many things. He had denounced the doings of the Continental Congress. He had referred bluntly to those who approved the Boston Tea Party, as "a pack of d---d rebels." He had gone so far as to state that rebels deserve death, a penalty he himself would be willing to administer if given opportunity. Finally,

Mr. Camp climaxed his pugnacity by a serious blunder. He told the committee that, if the college "advertised and neglected" him, he would treat them with ridicule. This defiant attitude was too much.

Without further ado, the students did "advertise" him on the door of the dining hall as an enemy of his country, and "neglected" him by refusing all social intercourse to the outlaw. They then allowed the world to judge the justice of their severity by publishing an account of the whole affair in a New Haven newspaper.<sup>27</sup> Since their victim was a native of that town, this gave him and his family further advertisement which could hardly have been welcome. It was stern treatment. Young Loyalists were no more popular than their fathers.

But business more exciting than stigmatizing Tories fanned the flame of youthful patriotism. Since February, the college yard had resounded to sharp commands and marching feet as the young gentlemen of the seminary drilled in a volunteer company of their own. On the 28th of June, they had a memorable opportunity to turn out for the commander-in-chief himself when Washington stopped overnight en route to assume his command outside Boston. Early in the morning, with two local companies in uniform and a crowd of citizenry, they escorted the great man and his officers out of town, to the lively tune of fife and drum. We are assured that their "expertness" in the military exercises gained them the "approbation of the Generals," and, indeed, they must have presented a "handsome appearance."<sup>28</sup> For them, it was ever a proud moment. A few days later Brigadier General Sullivan passed through New Haven, also hurrying to the Massachusetts camp. Adjutant General Gates soon followed. Then came a whole company of Pennsylvania riflemen.<sup>29</sup> The doings of Congress, proclamations, and war news filled the columns of the newspapers. The whole air was charged. In such an atmosphere restless students, unable to stick to their books any longer, joined a company, and said goodbye to their classmates.

As the excitement mounted, the maintenance of the ordinary college routine grew increasingly difficult. By incessant activity and zeal, Dwight did much to check the disrupting influences. But the academic walls were no longer sheltered. The annual subsidy from the legislature had to be discontinued because of the public

necessities. In the summer of 1776, the college was temporarily "broken up" on account of the prevalence of "camp distemper."<sup>30</sup> The war seriously hurt business in the town of New Haven, and shipping was destroyed. It became difficult to obtain provisions at any price. "For want of regular commons" and because of the impossibility of "subsisting" the students, the college again had to close from December 10, 1776, to January 8, 1777.

During the spring term there was a brave attempt to maintain the college life. In March the students observed the regular "exhibition" with appropriate exercises in the chapel. There was hot debate as to whether they should follow the precedent of the previous year and admit the ladies. A committee wrestled with the problem until late one night when, at eleven o'clock, they finally voted ungallantly in the negative. Their decision only increased the fury of the controversy. Those who were to participate in the performance, naturally felt it would be impossible to do themselves justice without feminine inspiration in the audience. This faction protested so loudly that the matter was referred to a special meeting of the whole student body which, to the glory of Yale, corrected the committee's gross error by a unanimous vote in the affirmative. With all the verve which this victory must have infused into the acting, student talent exhibited a tragedy and a comedy before the "largest and most splendid audience" which one senior had ever seen at a similar function.<sup>31</sup> Such pleasures could not last.

Conditions grew steadily more alarming. Because of the danger of enemy coastal raids and the general distraction, the corporation decided to move the college to less exposed places in the interior for the summer term. They arranged to transfer the library and other "appurtenances" to safer localities, and directed the students to assemble after the usual spring vacation in various inland towns. The freshmen were to go to Farmington under Tutor Lewis; the sophomores and juniors, to Glastonbury under Tutors Buckminster and Baldwin, and Professor Strong; and Senior Tutor Dwight was to find a suitable place for the senior class. He selected Wethersfield. For purposes of coordination President Daggett was to visit each place as he found it convenient. There was growing dissatisfaction with the old gentleman as an administrator, and toward



the end of March he resigned office as President, although he retained his Professorship of Divinity. Under these discouraging circumstances, the college authorities departed from New Haven, earnestly urging the town to protect the academic buildings and to preserve them from being used as barracks for troops.<sup>32</sup> It was a dark hour.

During these trying circumstances and in the light of the momentous happenings then occurring, Dwight adapted his instructions to the exigencies of the time. He tried to convince the young gentlemen under him that their four years at Yale, in and out of the classroom, should be a thoughtful preparation for the future, not a temporary amusement. This was the lesson his own tutor, Stephen Mix Mitchell, had brought home to him. Dwight repeated it with even greater force because of the swiftly moving events in the country at large.

While seeking health at home, he had had leisure between his walks and rides to chat earnestly with friends and politicians concerning the great issues facing them. Among the neighbors in Northampton was Joseph Hawley, an intimate of Dwight's father and one of the most determined and influential leaders in Massachusetts who refused to bow before "British tyranny."<sup>33</sup> Like Hawley, Dwight seems to have seen sooner than many which way the wind was blowing, and he made up his mind accordingly. As early as July, 1775, in a conversation with several respectable, firmly Whiggish gentlemen, he urged the necessity of absolute independence, using the same arguments which eventually proved decisive. But at that moment, Dwight's friends received his opinion with contemptuous hostility. Although the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill had already been fought and excitement was at fever pitch, these men were not yet ready for such a drastic step; and they represented the opinion of the bulk of thoughtful men in the country at that time. The minority who held Dwight's view hesitated to express themselves publicly. Dwight considered the die as cast, and thought hope of reconciliation had vanished. He believed America to be destined for great things. With independence once attained, he had no fear for the future.<sup>34</sup>

Convinced that his country would one day play an important

role in world affairs, he impressed upon his students at Yale the urgency of preparing themselves for participation in the scenes unfolding before them.<sup>35</sup> As he watched the steps by which the new American republic was being created, he foresaw that it would be unlike anything in old Europe. Its leaders during the critical years ahead would need to be of superior quality. The young gentlemen at Yale represented the best in the coming generation. Fully conscious of the significance of the national situation, he sought to make them ready.

In his Valedictory Address<sup>36</sup> to the graduating class in July, 1776, Dwight explained vividly why their country surpassed all others. In physical and economic resources, in political organization, in morals and religion, it seemed to him potentially better than anything the world had known. Here, he assured them, the progress of mankind toward perfection would undoubtedly be completed, and there would occur "the last thousand years of the reign of time," a glorious "Sabbath of peace, purity, and felicity." Progress, like the sun, would find its goal in the west. The glory of empire had moved from Assyria and Persia to Greece and Rome, and from there to Britain, each outshining the one before it in learning, power, and magnificence. But the empire of America was to be the most glorious of all, the last and brightest of time. It was to be the end of all things, a final kingdom belonging to the Saints Most High. This was the divine plan. It was the millennium itself.

Dwight, therefore, urged his young hearers to employ every moment and spare no labor to bring the day nearer. By so doing, they would advance the sum of human happiness, but also the glory of their Maker. They would not see the work finished; it was privilege enough to lay foundations and be an inspiration to posterity. Dwight spoke only three weeks after Congress had adopted the Declaration of Independence. The year 1776, although then only half gone, was obviously epochal for the American colonists and their descendants. To Dwight it was even more momentous; he pronounced it an "Aera in the history of mankind."<sup>37</sup> He told those Yale seniors who might be called to military life, to fight not only for the property, freedom, and life of the new America, but

for the millennial glory of all mankind and their Maker. It was the supreme cause. He and the young men who heard him soon had opportunity to make their contribution.

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Despite the rising war clouds and all the things he had to do, Dwight squeezed the study of theology into his busy schedule. He pursued the subject largely on his own initiative but with the aid and able guidance of his uncle, the Reverend Jonathan Edwards, Jr., who was then pastor of a church in New Haven. Dwight had long debated in his own mind whether to go into law or the ministry. His father advised him against the latter, on the ground that he was not a sufficiently fluent speaker. At that time Dwight had a hesitancy in his speech which seemed insurmountable. After weighing the problem carefully, he decided that this difficulty was merely a habit which a little determination could overcome. He settled the question by preaching his first sermon extemporaneously. To his satisfaction, he encountered none of the difficulties anticipated by his father. Having conquered this obstacle, he definitely decided to follow the Edwardean footsteps into the ministry.

On the 9th of June, 1777, he convinced a committee of the Northern Association of ministers in his native county of Hampshire, Massachusetts, as to his other qualifications, and received a license to preach. Thus authorized, he found a place to gain some actual experience. Although busy during the week instructing the Yale seniors in their Wethersfield retreat, Dwight now spent his Sabbaths "supplying" the vacant pulpit of a near-by church in Kensington parish (now Berlin). Whether this was with a view to permanent settlement is uncertain. In any event, it gave him his first taste of pulpit responsibility. Henceforth, he is the Reverend Timothy Dwight.<sup>38</sup>

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Meanwhile, he had taken another decisive step. In the winter of that same crowded, final year of his tutorship, this incredibly energetic young man somehow found time to win a lady. Miss Mary Woolsey was the daughter of his father's old classmate and room-



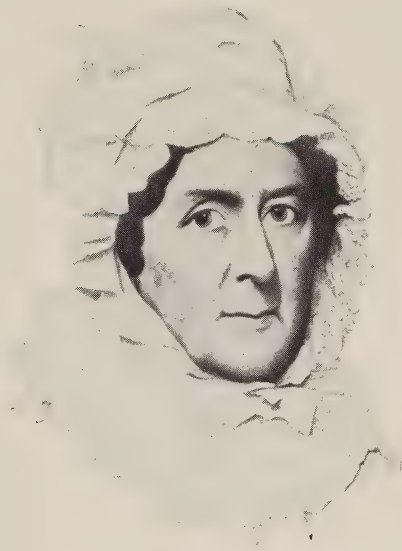
mate at Yale, Benjamin Woolsey of Dosoris, Long Island. The intimacy of their fathers must have smoothed the way for their own friendship. But where and when he first met her, what passed between them on that fateful occasion, and how he went about pursuing her, are questions which cannot now be answered. Regardless of how he managed it, he accomplished his purpose.

On March 3, 1777, they were married. Dwight's uncle and theological teacher, Jonathan Edwards the younger, officiated. The ceremony was performed at the house of another uncle, Pierrepont Edwards, in New Haven. Perhaps, the war accounts for this circumstance. Only a small group of friends and relatives witnessed the wedding.<sup>39</sup> For the rest of his life Dwight had Mary Woolsey to help him. With complete mutual confidence, they faced the years ahead together.

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In those disturbed times, the bride and groom could not have enjoyed a very lengthy honeymoon. Small matter, they were happy together that first summer in Wethersfield where Dwight attempted to withdraw the Yale seniors from the alarms of war. Because of the general turmoil, the corporation voted that the senior class be dismissed that year without any public examination or exhibition. But Tutor Dwight managed to arrange some sort of Commencement for his students while they were still at Wethersfield. On July 20, 1777, he preached two sermons as a baccalaureate to them, from Proverbs 8:17, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." Two days later, there were dialogues and a valedictory oration. This was better than no ceremony at all. On September 10th, the class, fifty-four in number and the largest ever graduated, received their degrees privately in New Haven.<sup>40</sup> That event meant a new kind of life for all of them. Many joined the army. For Dwight, too, it was the beginning of a new era.

Eight years had gone by since his own Commencement. He had the satisfaction of knowing that in that time he had done more than well. He had gained distinction as a teacher of rare ability and a writer of much promise. At twenty-five his record was one of which he could be proud. Although spurred by ambition, he



Mrs. Mary Woolsey Dwight





had learned to think of other things besides success. Uncontrollable zeal for his work had broken his health almost beyond repair. Only the greatest determination had carried him through a long, bitter fight for recovery. He was not a man who could be beaten easily. His shattered eyesight remained as a continual reminder of how close he had come to an untimely grave. He knew what it was like to feel the inexorable approach of death. He found the answers to his questions not in the natural law of Newtonianism but in the religion of his forefathers. With that experience behind him, he put emotion and force into a baccalaureate to youthful graduates on "I love them that love me, and those that seek me *early* shall find me." Living in a time of vital national upheaval, he eagerly watched the progress of contemporary events and saw their significance. Since that day when, clad in a homespun "dress," he had taken his own diploma, the years had brought him maturity. Those now immediately ahead were to be filled with new and heavier responsibilities. They were to ripen that maturity into a mellow fullness.

### CHAPTER III

## Chaplain in the Revolutionary Army

DWIGHT AND HIS BRIDE had only that one happy summer together in Wethersfield before the war separated them. Two weeks before Commencement news spread through the college that the senior tutor intended to resign and join the army. Several circumstances apparently led him to this decision. He and President Daggett had worked together harmoniously; but Dr. Daggett was retiring that fall, and a new man would become head of the institution. Perhaps Dwight thought that might mean that he would no longer be able to play so important a part in the administration.

During the summer there had been much speculation as to who should be Dr. Daggett's successor. The students as a body expressed their opinion by framing a petition to be presented to the corporation urging the election of Dwight. Their senior tutor was young, energetic, and full of new ideas. He had already proved himself an able administrator as well as an unusually successful teacher. In the eyes of many Yale men, Dr. Daggett had never been a happy choice as an executive. It was natural that Dwight should have supporters among the students and younger alumni who were eager for a more energetic and progressive leader at the head of the college.

But Dwight himself had the foresight to realize that the corporation would consider the office too important to be filled during such troubled times by a youth only twenty-five years of age. There were older candidates whose claims were better. Moreover, the prospect immediately ahead of the scattered college was black. The war had already brought overwhelming difficulties. It would be no easy task to hold the struggling seminary together through a prolonged and bitter conflict. Dwight wisely suppressed the peti-

tion before it could reach the corporation. It was not an opportune moment to push his candidacy for such a high office. The attitude of the students was a gratifying recognition of his popularity, but he could well afford to wait.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, he made other plans. From his close friend David Humphreys, who was then an officer in General Samuel H. Parsons' First Connecticut Brigade of the Continental Army, Dwight must have received news and letters which made it hard to stay behind. A number of other Yale men had already joined the same brigade. During the summer of 1777 General Parsons himself pushed the recruiting in Connecticut, and many of Dwight's students in the senior class were waiting impatiently to enlist as soon as they could seize their diplomas. War fever was high, but they probably caught much of their enthusiasm from Dwight himself who, as we have seen, was preaching patriotism in strong terms. With the college facing a precarious future under a new president, who might not be congenial, Dwight probably found it comparatively easy at that moment to cut loose and follow his own patriotic inclinations. As a clergyman he could not enjoy the privilege of carrying a rifle, but he could do the next best thing. General Parsons had a place for him as chaplain to the First Connecticut Brigade, and on October 6, 1777, Congress formally approved the appointment. So, although he had been married only a few months, he was off to new duties and a new experience.<sup>2</sup>

It was a critical time for American arms. Washington and Howe were facing each other at Philadelphia, where the campaigning had not been encouraging to the patriots. But the source of greatest worry lay to the north. Parsons' Brigade was part of the army which was then guarding the Hudson River at Peekskill under the command of Connecticut's own Israel Putnam. That hardy old warrior, veteran of campaigns against the Indians as well as of the battles of Bunker Hill and Brooklyn Heights, now found himself in another uncomfortable spot. Burgoyne was coming down from Canada at the head of a formidable army, and, although his progress had been slow, the chance of stopping him seemed sadly uncertain.

More immediately disquieting to Putnam was the report that Sir Henry Clinton had left New York City and was pushing rap-



idly up the lower Hudson as a diversion to aid the northern invader. Forts Montgomery and Clinton were the chief obstacles in Clinton's path, and one afternoon at the end of the first week in October, their small garrisons were suddenly attacked by a strong enemy force. The noise of the cannonading, reverberating down the valley, told Putnam, on the other side of the river, what was happening. He quickly sent troops to aid, but as the reinforcements were boarding barges to cross the river, the guns ceased firing. There was a moment of silence. Then the men on the barges heard three lusty cheers from the forts and knew that they were too late.

The British boats cleared the Hudson of obstructions placed across it by the Americans, and because his force was inadequate to risk a battle, "Old Put" found it necessary to withdraw hastily up the river. He sent out frantic calls for troops, and fortunately, under General Parsons' urging, recruits from Connecticut were arriving in large numbers. Dwight was doubtless among them. It was a warm moment for a green chaplain to begin an initiation into the hazards of war.

Then came joyous news from Saratoga. Burgoyne had been forced to surrender his entire army. The Americans were the heroes. There was nothing for Clinton to do but return whence he had come. The danger was over, and Putnam jubilantly reoccupied the Peekskill headquarters which he had evacuated so hurriedly. Back at the old camp, he indulged in the luxury of ceremony. There were a grand parade, a salute of thirteen cannon—one for each of the thirteen states—and finally three loud huzzas from the throats of the entire army, the sound of which, according to an eye and ear witness, "seemed almost to rend the air with the noise." Saratoga put new life into the Continentals.<sup>3</sup>

It was in the midst of these stirring events that Dwight started his military career. His official capacity enabled him to enjoy certain comforts denied to the rank and file. By Congressional resolution, he was entitled to a colonel's pay and rations—when they were to be had. His position and his personality gained him the companionship of the highest officers. He was, of course, not called upon to use a bayonet. His was a gentler function. Nevertheless, the chaplain of Parsons' Brigade had ample opportunity to acquire a first-hand acquaintance with the grimy viciousness of war.<sup>4</sup>

He saw it at its dirtiest that autumn in Westchester County. Dwight had known the region before the war when it had been a quiet farming county where life went on in the calm of rustic isolation. Here and there a great family had a country seat and made a stir when they went to town in a big carriage. But most of the inhabitants were ordinary citizens who traveled unostentatiously in wagons which could boast no springs to soften the bumps between farm and store. Indeed, all classes found that the most comfortable method of moving over the rough roads was on horseback, and even the local physician would pack his medicines in a pair of saddlebags and make his rounds on a sure-footed mount. In winter the snows made the roads impassable for days at a time, by any means of transportation. At all seasons, neighbors depended upon one another, and there was much good will and mutual assistance. It had been a simple, friendly life. Now all that was changed. Civil war split friends and neighbors into bitter factions. "Tories," "traitors," and "rebels," they called one another, and every man suspected every other.

By the time Dwight began his military service there, the county had already suffered much from the campaigns of 1776 and '77. After Burgoyne's defeat the British had to give up the idea of cutting off New England. They still had a firm hold on New York City, but they could invade neither New York State nor New England without hard fighting. Washington threw a tight line around Manhattan Island, and as the cold put an end to the season's campaigning, the two enemies settled down in more or less fixed positions, facing each other for the winter. The American outposts stretched roughly from Mamaroneck on the Sound to Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson. The British extended theirs from West Farms to Kingsbridge. Between the two lines was no man's land, an area where raiding parties from both sides fought and ravaged at will. Civil government had ceased, and the military control of neither side extended over it. No one could call life or property his own. The inhabitants had to protect themselves as best they could, for "between the lines" there was only guerrilla warfare at its nastiest.<sup>5</sup>

Serving with his brigade close to the center of that afflicted region, Dwight saw little glory but much wretchedness. The inhabitants suffered from all sides. The American army requisitioned

their crops and livestock or destroyed such supplies to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. The Americans might pay for what they took but the British foraging parties which slipped easily through the thinly manned American lines, felt no such obligation. However, such forays were risky. Farmers gathered quickly to fight off enemy raiders in deadly running skirmishes, shooting from behind barns, fences, and trees, to keep what was theirs. Horses lost their riders, and more than one galloping cavalryman felt his horse suddenly sink beneath him. It was a ruthless game of ambushes and swift surprises in which quarter was neither expected nor given. British officers such as Tarleton, Tryon, Grey, and Simcoe became notorious for the desperate recklessness with which they terrorized the region. Their names were hated, and their activities aroused a bitterness which lasted for years after war itself had ceased. Dwight saw the devastating effects of their efforts at every turn.<sup>6</sup>

Worse than the British army foragers were the bands of free-booting marauders. Many of these were Loyalists who played a variety of important roles. Since there were no maps, the British raiders depended upon Tory natives to guide them down back roads and across the unfamiliar country. Tories were equally valuable as spies because they continually received timely information from friends and relatives who did not take up arms for the King themselves but sympathized with those who did. Loyalist leaders recruited companies, and, being natives and therefore known, they soon became more detested by the patriot population than the enemy itself. Colonel Robert Rogers, a noted fighter in the French and Indian War, headed a company known as the "Queen's Rangers," and added to his reputation by using the same methods of warfare he had found effective against the savages. James De Lancey was captain of a troop of sixty horsemen, one of several bands known as "Cow-boys" because, not content with lighter booty, they boldly drove off the farmers' cattle and took whatever else appealed to them.

These companies were "irregulars," not technically part of the British army. Consequently, they depended upon their own efforts for horses, equipment, and reward, which made them all the more greedy and merciless. If the British did not authorize their plunder-



ing activities, nothing was done to stop them, because subduing "rebels" was dirty work at best. Many members of the Tory "ir-regulars" had personal grievances against former neighbors, and their vengeance fell upon women and children as well as men. On winter nights they burned houses, leaving the inhabitants nothing but the nightclothes they were wearing, for protection against the cold. Brutality, broken paroles, and the reputation of the Tories for treachery made them a hated group. The "patriots" retaliated in kind. There was cruelty and vindictive bitterness on both sides.<sup>7</sup>

In the midst of so much disorder, the criminal element of the population seized the opportunity. Prowling at night, thieves and desperadoes preyed pitilessly upon isolated families, plundering them of the next day's food and whatever seemed worth the bother. David Humphreys, who served with Dwight in this troubled area, described the plight of a fifteen-year-old girl thus victimized. Because of Loyalist sympathies, her father had been forced to take refuge in New York. Soon after, her mother died, leaving her alone to care for several small brothers and sisters. British and American raiders plundered her of furniture and clothes, and finally took the only cow she had left for milk for the children. Then, one winter night, ruffians broke into the house, and the terrified girl fled in the cold to a swamp near by. After a freezing night in the open, she died of exposure. Such were the stories which Dwight heard while stationed in that war-torn region where not even children were safe from raiders and bandits.<sup>8</sup>

General Putnam did what he could to check the marauders, but it was a hopeless task. When the British burned the house of a Patriot, the Americans replied by destroying the home of a Tory. Each encounter increased the hatred between the two sides. Peace did not end the desire for vengeance between individuals. Years later, victims recognized old attackers and did not stop at murder. Putnam's attempts to relieve the wretchedness of the district only gained him unpopularity. Patriots disliked his generosity toward the deserted and suffering families of Tories. Persons greedy for Tory property disliked him for the obstacles he put in their way. Tories naturally had little faith in him. Being Putnam's close friend as well as a sharp observer, Dwight had opportunity to survey the situation from every point of view.<sup>9</sup>

Dwight sympathized deeply with the inhabitants. He saw people who had once been industrious and happy, now compelled to give up the struggle for existence. He tried to talk to them but found it impossible. Knowing only fear, they suspected an army chaplain as much as every one else. They spoke only when necessary, answering questions obsequiously with a few words chosen carefully so as not to offend the inquirer. He found that they responded coldly even to kind treatment. They remained apathetic to everything except the possibility of some new injury. He saw their houses desolate from violence and decay. Broken windows and furniture remained unrepaired, from poverty or in expectation of some other marauder. Their cattle were gone, their fences burned for fuel, their land overgrown with high grass and weeds. There was no incentive to cultivate farms for the benefit of raiders and robbers. Farmhouses everywhere were empty and deserted.

Before the war Dwight had seen the heavy traffic of horses and carriages on the great post road, the main thoroughfare between New York and Boston. All had been life and bustle. Now he seldom encountered a single traveler from month to month. The very tracks of the carriages were overgrown or obliterated. The world seemed motionless and silent, except when some unhappy native ventured upon a lonely excursion to the house of a neighbor similarly afflicted; or when a scouting party in search of the enemy alarmed the inhabitants with fresh expectations of attack. These dreary scenes reminded the young chaplain of the passage in the Song of Deborah and gave it new significance:

In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied; and the travellers walked through by-paths. The inhabitants of the villages ceased: they ceased in Israel.

It was a picture which he never forgot.<sup>10</sup>

He saw no big battles in Westchester County during those last months of 1777, but his brigade was kept busy trying to suppress lawlessness, keeping close watch at their posts for enemy raiders, and countering with attacks of their own. Part of the time they served along the coast, protecting it from attack and occasionally braving the rough, chilly waters of the Sound to make a bold dash

on Long Island to carry off some highly prized prisoner or surprise a British outpost. They crossed in boats, sharp at each end and manned with eight to ten oars in the manner of whaleboats, and their raids caused much trouble for British shipping in the East River and the Sound. Both sides indulged in these whaleboat escapades, but the Americans seem to have excelled at it.

When the British seized General Silliman in his home at Fairfield, Connecticut, the deed so aroused that gentleman's friends in the American army that, having no suitable prisoner by means of whom they could effect his exchange, they determined to get one. A picked group rowed one night to Long Island, concealed their boat in the bushes, and, with notable effrontery, took Judge Jones from a ball then at the height of its gayety in that eminent Tory's own house on Hempstead plain. Eventually the two prisoners were exchanged, much to their mutual satisfaction. Such were the exploits which came to Chaplain Dwight's attention during the first months of his military novitiate.<sup>11</sup>

As a chaplain he himself missed the thrill of actually participating in similar adventures, but camp life itself was not always humdrum. At first it must have interested him especially for the discipline he found there. To his academic eyes the rules contrasted sharply with the methods he had used in governing a college. The high command rested in the person of General Israel Putnam, whose rough exterior belied the surprisingly gentle nature which lay beneath. Officers who had been associated with him considered "Old Put" too lax and too old to be an effective leader any longer. But, under any commander, discipline was difficult in an army composed of officers and men who had been accustomed from childhood to asserting their individuality according to varying standards. Putnam laid down the law with a hand which seems heavy enough today.

Courts-martial were frequent, and the penalties imposed corresponded with the justice of the time. George Cook, arraigned for sleeping at his post, escaped lightly. In a kindly mood, the court sentenced him to fifty lashes on the bare back but recommended pardon because for several days previous to his offense the man had been so ill that he had been "kept awake two or three nights before, by his distemper." He was therefore unfit for duty, and



luckily he was also "standing up when found asleep." The General, to his credit, accepted the court's recommendation.

Toward others he did not unbend. Reuben Smith, tried as an enemy to his country and robber of the well "Effected Inhabitan-  
ance," was made an example to other similarly minded "Villins." His sentence included one hundred lashes on the "naked body," the first twenty to be inflicted "tomorrow morning" at grand parade, and the remaining installments day by day before each brigade. After that he was to be kept at hard labor on board a ship of war in the North River and "secured" from making his escape for the duration of the war. John Thompson was found guilty of enlisting in three different regiments in order to collect the bounty, and then deserting from each. But the court considered him an "old and worthless" person, and therefore let him off with one hundred lashes, after which he was to be drummed out of camp with a halter around his neck as a "Rogue and Rascall." On another more solemn occasion all the troops were commanded to parade at nine o'clock in the morning "neat and clean" to attend the execution of one John Murray. That was the only award for captured spies. When Tryon interceded for Nathan Palmer, Putnam wrote a laconic reply stating coldly that the prisoner in question, "a Lieutenant in your King's service," had been taken as a spy, tried as a spy, condemned as a spy, and "you may rest assured, sir, he shall be hanged as a spy"; then followed a pithy postscript: "P. S. Afternoon.—He is hanged."

Gallows Hill and the whipping post were familiar spots to Chaplain Dwight. His was the duty of attending prisoners sentenced to death. He did what he could to make them ready. Sometimes he received their thanks. A few were saved by a last-minute pardon. They especially were grateful for his compassionate attention. It was grim work for a thoughtful young minister who had once come close to death himself. The men and things he saw in Putnam's camp impressed him deeply. Although he was not exposed to the confusion of battle or the danger of reckless exploits, there was adventure enough. He was rubbing elbows with a great variety of fellow humans under the trials of military life.<sup>12</sup>

Later in the winter Dwight shifted to a new scene where activity of a different kind occurred. Since the destruction of Forts

Montgomery and Clinton, Washington had considered it absolutely necessary to rebuild a strong post on the Hudson for protection against another British attempt to cut communication between the states. After due consideration, the authorities selected a spot known as West Point because it was strategically located on high ground commanding a narrow bend in the river where the uncertain winds made navigation difficult.

While this decision was being achieved, the First Connecticut Brigade built themselves a cantonment of log huts at Philipstown which was near the site of the new fort but on the opposite side of the river. They had settled down to warm fires and a winter of comparative comfort when a sudden order to occupy West Point abruptly uprooted them. There were no log huts over there. All was open and wintry. Fortunately, by that time the men were more or less reconciled to official military consideration. The winter was a severe one, and at that point the Hudson was sufficiently frozen to be crossed easily on the ice, if they avoided the soft spots. They climbed the steep ascent to a small plain covered with yellow pines ten or fifteen feet high. The snow was knee-deep or more. At that moment it was a dreary spot swept by piercing winds blowing down the bleak mountain valley. Lopping off the tops of the pines and treading down the snow, the soldiers spread out their blankets and spent more than one night under the stars. Toughened by two years of hard campaigning, they no longer considered their superiors ungracious for expecting them to do this.

Yet, they wasted no time erecting shelters. Since the pines were not large enough to be used for huts, it was necessary to make temporary covers out of the scanty materials available until larger logs could be dragged from the mountain side. They crossed the icy river to a swamp for rushes with which to thatch their shanties. They erected these below the summit of the upper bank for protection against the northwest wind. Building barracks in a stormy February was disheartening work, but after the first chilly weeks they were once again in fairly solid quarters.

With that accomplished, the next task was to clear away the snow from the site of the new fort and trace out its plan. A road also had to be cut through the woods to the river. That was not an undertaking for those inclined to relax. On fair days parties

went up the river to cut timber and haul logs to the river's edge in preparation for floating them down to the Point as soon as the ice should begin to break. It was hard, rough labor but, with warm cabins in which to take refuge at night, and provisions served with "tolerable regularity," these veteran troops tried to persuade themselves that they were reasonably happy.<sup>13</sup>

Morale counted for much, and cheerful words from the chaplain did not go amiss. For Valley Forge was not the only place where Washington's men were uncomfortable that gloomy winter of 1777-1778. There were moments when high officers, as well as the rank and file, grew discontented looking at the mountains of the Hudson valley, and longed for home. General Parsons, who succeeded Putnam in command at the Highlands as work on the fortifications began, wrote to Washington that, having served since Bunker Hill, he himself was eager to retire to private life but feared to do so because of the effect it might have upon his officers and men, who were already alarmingly restless.

There was justification for their dissatisfaction. One regiment was in a particularly pitiful plight. In that unit few had "either a shoe or a shirt," and most of them had neither stockings, breeches, nor overalls. There was not a blanket among them. Whole companies of enlisted artificers were in the same predicament. Several hundred men were therefore useless because, in February of a severe winter, they had no equipment. Teams and wagons, tools and materials were all hard to get. The troops had to be fed as well as clothed, but the treasury was empty and the currency depreciated.

Governor Clinton of New York gave aid which proved invaluable because with the coming of spring it was essential to rush the completion of the fort before the enemy attempted to interrupt the labor. As soon as the frost was out of the ground, the digging began and the work progressed feverishly. Expecting to be attacked daily, the men gathered stones and timbers, undaunted by the numerous rattlesnakes which, with reptilian misunderstanding, angrily resented the intruders. Somehow the thing was gradually accomplished.<sup>14</sup>

During all this activity Dwight watched officers and men solve the problems before them. Close association under such try-



ing conditions brought out all the good and bad in human nature, and Dwight learned much from those about him. Part of the time he was quartered with the staff in a large log hut near the center of the plain. The group included some good companions. General Parsons himself was a man of ability and culture. Geographic convenience had been responsible for sending him to Harvard although his father had been a Yale man and a New Divinity clergyman. Parsons' classmates at Cambridge included such figures as John Hancock, John Adams, and Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut. His mother was a Griswold, one of the first families in the ruling Connecticut aristocracy. After Harvard, Parsons became a successful lawyer in Connecticut with a wide acquaintance among people of importance. He was a man of affairs, active in state politics. Now over forty years of age with a wide experience already behind him, he was inspiring both as a companion and as a commander.<sup>15</sup>

Although Parsons was a Harvard graduate, Dwight had the company of many Yale men. Among them were Colonel Wyllys, Lieutenant Colonels Grosvenor and Sherman, Major Grey, and several junior officers, some of whom had been Dwight's pupils in New Haven. During the first months at West Point there was also the French engineer, La Radière, but he proved less than an asset to the social circle. He was an irritable foreigner who disagreed with all the plans for the fort which others approved. His physique was too frail for the rigorous life, and he was replaced by another adventurer whose manners were agreeably conciliatory. This was Kosciusko, the romantic Polish gentleman whose attempted elopement had been brusquely thwarted by the unsympathetically pugnacious father of the bride-to-be, with the result that Kosciusko sought to bury his disappointment in the career of a soldier of fortune far from his native land, or so the gossips said. At the Highlands he diverted himself by measuring the height of the mountains, and, being a good mathematician, he may well have debated similar problems with Chaplain Dwight. Certainly, he added an interesting figure to the society of a dreary camp. Another welcome member was Colonel Rufus Putnam, brought from Connecticut also to help solve the engineering problems. With these and other officers Dwight was a favorite.

He easily adapted himself to the life and contributed much to the conversation at headquarters. He was a close friend of both Putnam and Parsons, and later when Gates took over the command, that gentleman found it pleasant to invite the chaplain to his tent for frequent chats. Dwight also must have spent many hours with his old classmate David Avery, who had been performing the duties of a chaplain since the battle of Lexington.

When the news of that affair had reached Avery in western Massachusetts, the ardent young pastor had preached a farewell sermon to his congregation and taken twenty patriotic parishioners with him to the Boston front. There he had spent the night after the battle of Bunker Hill dressing the wounds of the soldiers and giving them new courage. Sometimes he had shouldered a musket himself and taken his turn at guard duty. He had dined frequently at the table of General Washington, and followed the commander-in-chief through the discouraging events of Long Island, White Plains, and across New Jersey. He had braved the bitter cold at Trenton where, in the midst of the disorder, he had seized the gun of a fallen soldier; and from the top of a hogshhead recently emptied of its rum by the Hessians he had fired away at the fleeing foe with the gusto of a victorious layman. Under more reverent conditions he had found overturned hogshheads equally convenient as desks from which to preach sermons to his regiment. Being a big man with a big voice, he made himself heard from any pulpit. Now at the Highlands David Avery could tell his old college classmate all about the war, and it is safe to guess that they did not always discuss the pros and cons of New Divinity theology. Located in a cold and bleak forest, West Point was not the most cheerful spot to be that winter, but Dwight had abundant opportunity there to exercise his own gift for good conversation and benefit by the talents of others.<sup>16</sup>

No matter how congenial the company might be, the life was unexciting, especially for men accustomed to active campaigning. Fortifying West Point meant week after week of prodigious labor, hauling huge tree trunks and boulders, and heaving them into place. It was a lonely point, too, far in the woods remote from everything. Dwight, viewing the surrounding country from the summit of one of the mountains, found "not a cheerful object within our

horizon." Everything was "majestic, solemn, wild, and melancholy." Forest stretched as far as his eye could reach, dotted only here and there by a house and cut by the broad Hudson making its frozen way through the mountains. He found the scenery beyond even his poetic powers of description.<sup>17</sup>

Dwight could appreciate its isolated beauty, but not all his companions were so fortunate. When a friend wrote to General Parsons inquiring where he was, Parsons found the question puzzling and could locate the camp only by saying that it was "at a place on Hudson's River called West Point opposite where Fort Constitution once stood." He added that, to a contemplative mind which delighted in a lonely retreat from the world where it could rest upon the magnificence of nature, this spot, with its inaccessible mountains covered with deep piles of snow, was "as beautiful as Sharon"; but to one who loved the society of the world, the place presented "a prospect nearly allied to the shades of death." However, Parsons found solace in the fact that "Mr. Dwight and Mr. Humphreys" were there, and an additional good companion now and then increased the number of his "agreeable family."<sup>18</sup>

Even after the snows had disappeared and summer gave the scene a more cheerful aspect, one of Parsons' subordinates complained of being banished among spades and shovels, and pleaded plaintively for news and newspapers or "anything to keep us alive," for "this is actually t'other end of the world."<sup>19</sup> When one of the army surgeons arrived at the post in all the glory of June, he grieved deeply at finding the place surrounded by "hideous mountains and dreary forests" without a house in sight from his particular quarters. After having become reconciled to his first disappointment, he later admitted that the scenery contained elements of beauty when viewed from the river although he seems to have remained chiefly interested in that body of water as an efficient means of communication between Albany and New York.<sup>20</sup> Strategically, of course, West Point was a key post of vital importance. Socially it was forlorn, and army men who knew, sought to avoid being doomed to its monotony.

On the other hand, later in the summer after the batteries and redoubts had taken reassuring shape, officers and men gained a sense of security which eased the tension. The enemy cooperated



by making no effort to interfere with the progress of the work, and there was a temptation to indulge in more frequent moments of relaxation. Individuals displayed varying degrees of resourcefulness in contriving methods to relieve the tedium of wooded isolation. Not all were happy in their choice of diversions. Once when the hospital's supply of mutton ran low, predatory orderlies were dispatched against the sheep which were allowed to run at large in the woods near by. Having nothing better to do that day, Dr. Thacher, surgeon of the staff, took gun in hand and joined the hunt. After hours of "labor and fatigue" he returned, humbly, with but one specimen of the elusive game as his contribution to the day's bag.

This provoked a colleague to derisive criticism of the doctor's marksmanship, and, to settle the argument, the two agreed upon a test of skill. They placed a target at the end of the garden but after the third fire discovered that, instead of the mark, they had hit a fine saddle horse which, with a number of fellow bystanders, had been innocently grazing within range. Medical skill failed to save their hapless victim. It was a valuable animal highly prized by its owner, who, as fortune would have it, happened to be a brigadier general of high authority. Under the circumstances, the two physicians abandoned their original project and decided forthwith to discontinue their sharpshooting rivalry.

Later in the day they received a billet from the general peremptorily requesting them to wait upon him at his quarters that evening. At the conference the two guilty gentlemen made their apologies and agreed that justice demanded prompt compliance with the general's demand for the cost of his horse, one hundred and fifty dollars. Having satisfied the requirements of the situation honorably, they were further chastened by the discovery that a ball from one of their guns had landed in the ground a few feet in front of a soldier who had been watching the horses. Considering themselves fortunate to have escaped a more serious catastrophe, they laid aside their guns in favor of the instruments of their profession, in the use of which, it is to be hoped, they were more expert.<sup>21</sup>

There were other less dangerous amusements which produced more pleasant results. As the season for active campaigning waned,

the officers fell into the habit of giving gay supper parties in turn. The southerners, of course, excelled at this sort of thing, occasionally uncorking the bottle with immoderate enthusiasm. Excess did not accord with Dr. Thacher's views of time well spent but, according to his own confession, he frequently allowed himself to be enticed into their revels.

He seems to have enjoyed especially a dinner given by Brigadier General Muhlenberg, the Virginia parson who had responded to the outbreak of the war by donning a sword and cockade and marching off at the head of his own company. His guests on this occasion included forty-one officers, and the banquet consisted of fourteen different dishes all served "in fashionable style." General Putnam was persuaded to preside over the toasts and displayed as much urbanity at the head of the table as bravery at the front of his division. Merry songs were sung; and the company was further "cheered" by military music and dancing until a very late hour.

Another time, when a colonel from the Point called at the hospital on the opposite side of the Hudson, the staff received him and his "much admired lady" with all the cordiality that formality would permit. The "cheering glass" was not removed until evening. The hosts then concluded festivities by accompanying their guests to the colonel's barge where, aided by two more bottles of port, they said appropriately gallant farewells at the river's edge. Next day courtesy demanded that the medical gentlemen return the colonel's visit, and at West Point they were entertained in an equally "genteel manner."<sup>22</sup>

Chaplain Dwight doubtless did not indulge in such extreme revelry, but he was exposed to the atmosphere, and very likely the monotony of a military camp drove him to less frivolous dinners attended by sober Yale men trained to his own standards of conduct. Perhaps it was this glimpse of southern worldliness which strengthened his Puritanical suspicions of the morals to be found below Mason and Dixon's line.

Dwight himself had serious things to do. At the Highlands, surrounded by all the beauty of nature and undisturbed by the foe, he found time and inspiration to keep alive his literary interests. The congenial presence of his friend and fellow poet David Humphreys provided stimulation. Dwight had finished his epic

*The Conquest of Canaan*, but the outbreak of the war had prevented its publication. From time to time he made revisions, and now, in the spring of 1778, inspired by the leadership of Washington, he determined to dedicate his poem to the commander-in-chief, if permission could be obtained.

General Parsons helped by sending Dwight's polite request to Valley Forge with a warm letter of recommendation. Washington had now passed through the worst of that gloomy winter outside Philadelphia, and was apparently in a mood to encourage the efforts of rising literary genius. He promptly and graciously consented to the proposed dedication. The poem did not appear in print until two years after the treaty of peace, and by that time the author had additional reasons for dedicating it to the father of his country. But, even while Dwight was sloshing about in the mud at West Point, he must have found correspondence with General Washington exciting.<sup>23</sup>

More pertinent to the immediate needs of the camp were the patriotic songs and hymns which Dwight composed and set to music during odd hours there. These seem to have attained a wide popularity. One became a particular favorite and continued to be sung long after the battles had ceased. This was his "Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise," which dwelt upon the same theme which Dwight had emphasized in his Valedictory Address of 1776. Convincingly phrased, the hymn reminded the troops that they were heroes defending "the rights of mankind" and fighting to establish "on freedom's broad basis" an empire destined to be the "last and noblest of time." Indeed, Dwight assured them it would dissolve only "with the skies," and painted a glowing picture of the future glory of their country:

Thy fleets to all regions thy pow'r shall display,  
The nations admire, and the ocean obey;  
Each shore to thy glory its tribute unfold,  
And the East and the South yield their spices and gold.  
As the day-spring unbounded, thy splendor shall flow,  
And earth's little kingdoms before thee shall bow,  
Whilst the ensigns of union in triumph unfurl'd,  
Hush the tumult of war, and give peace to the world.



Thus, as down a lone valley, with cedar o'erspread,  
 From war's dread confusion, I pensively stray'd,  
 The gloom from the face of fair heav'n retir'd;  
 The winds ceas'd to murmur; the thunder expir'd;  
 Perfumes as of Eden, flow'd sweetly along,  
 And a voice, as of angels, enchantingly sung:  
 "Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,  
 The Queen of the world, and the child of the skies." <sup>24</sup>

These words may not stir a modern reader to patriotic ecstasy, but in 1778 America had produced no great poets of her own, and, in the midst of a desperate struggle for independence, men looked with eager favor upon the verse of a fellow patriot. It was not so much the quality of the poetry which gained approval as the excellence of the sentiments expounded therein. Dwight gave expression to popular ideas with an eloquence which his audience considered superior. He was addressing soldiers who were badly equipped, poorly fed, and meagerly paid when paid at all. They were battling a severe climate as well as a powerful foe, and they needed to believe that their efforts were for a cause worthy of sacrifice and suffering. As they rested around evening fires, the chaplain's song of confident triumph ringing out in the night served to arouse drooping spirits after the fatigue of a laborious day. It was a backlog against which the flaming brands of a new nationalism could burn and sparkle vigorously. It carried the conviction that the cause for which they were striving had a lasting value. It made victory seem more important and more probable. The words of the song flowed smoothly enough. To patriots the meter and rhymes possessed a pleasant power, and they sang it lustily. Regardless of its merit as tested by today's poetic standards, Dwight's hymn performed an invaluable purpose at that time. That was the important thing. He and his countrymen had a war to win.<sup>25</sup>

His sermons were equally effective. The men of the brigade were mostly Connecticut farmers who had been "soberly educated" to listen to the truths of the Gospel and were therefore receptive to the words of their chaplain; but Dwight was not content to give them the same old dogmas which they had heard since

childhood. He preached with fresh ardor on the problems immediately before them, and filled his sermons with a special brand of Christian patriotism. With a commanding presence and splendid diction, he was an orator who quickly captured the attention of his audience. A pile of regimental drums formed an appropriate pulpit for his martial eloquence. Unencumbered by notes, he spoke extemporaneously with a fluent force and simple clarity which impressed his fellow officers as much as it did the rank and file. He delivered his discourses with all the fire of youthful enthusiasm combined with firm faith in the truth and importance of what he was preaching. His words rang with a convincing sincerity. He chose them well and hit the mark squarely.<sup>26</sup>

His discourse delivered before the American camp, by order of General Putnam, at the observation of a general thanksgiving for the capture of Burgoyne, indicates the character of his efforts at military homiletics.<sup>27</sup> He carried the same tone and thought into many of his ordinary Sabbath addresses. Having, when still a child, learned the stories of sacred history well, Dwight chose his text for this occasion with peculiarly happy discrimination. He selected Joel 2:20-21:

But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea; and his ill savor shall come up, because he hath done great things. Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things!

This passage dealt with an event which Dwight deemed parallel to the one his hearers had gathered to celebrate. He felt that there were lessons to be learned from both, and he explained them skillfully.

First he told the biblical story. The great Sennacherib, ruler of Assyria in the days of her mightiest power, had sent his habitually victorious general, Ras-Shakeh, to beat into submission the little nation of the Hebrews. At the head of a superb army of veterans who had never known defeat, Sennacherib's intrepid warrior laid waste all Judea up to the very gates of Jerusalem. A proud man was Ras-Shakeh, accustomed to success and convinced of his own invincibility against every foe, human or divine. He laughed con-

temptuously at the pitiful band of Jews opposing him there. Being also a wicked man "nursed in the stews of Nineveh," he did not hesitate to "hiss" at the vengeance of God. Encamped before the city, he sent a sneering proclamation to the Hebrew commander demanding immediate unconditional surrender. He filled his message with scorn for the town's defenses and threats of horrible consequences should the lowly Jews attempt, however feebly, to thwart his wishes. Ras-Shakeh argued that he had always carried everything before him. Therefore, what was to prevent him from doing so now?

But the inhabitants of the city, led by the noble Hezekiah, refused to tremble before the Assyrian menace. Determined to defend themselves as best they could, they trusted in God and asked His aid. Instead of returning insult for insult, Hezekiah devoted his time as much to prayer as to military preparations. He was a righteous man, and righteousness prevailed. In a single night the Assyrians suddenly died by thousands. A devastating epidemic descended upon them and drove them from the siege. Having heard the prayers of the virtuous Hezekiah and his people, Jehovah removed the impious Assyrian despoilers far off, with their faces toward the east sea, and their hinder part toward the utmost sea. And the stink of their disgrace rose up like that of their dead lying outside the walls of Jerusalem.

After recounting this ancient epic, Dwight pointed out that divine vengeance, in the same manner, had descended upon haughty Burgoyne. Even as Sennacherib had squeezed tribute from the Jews, so George III had demanded more and more from the American colonists until at last they reached the point of rebellion. To satisfy the greed of insatiable tyranny came an overbearing minion. Proud of the number and valor of his troops and flushed with his first successes, General Burgoyne published to Americans the only proclamation which, of all those issued during the intervening centuries, could be compared to that of Ras-Shakeh.<sup>28</sup> Here were the same threatening demands, the same arrogant pretensions, although Dwight credited Burgoyne with claiming only a few of the divine attributes while his Assyrian predecessor had boasted superiority over every deity.

The inhabitants of New York and New England answered the



invader's pronunciamiento by flocking to the standard of General Gates. Unawed by threats, they determined to live or die free men. In the battle of Bennington, Dwight saw the first augury of the divine wrath which was about to fall upon the vainglorious Briton. Disdaining the possibility of defeat at the hands of a few backwoodsmen, pride, said Dwight, drove Burgoyne to certain ruin, for it prevented him from turning back before it was too late. Finally, faced by the alternative of either surrendering his army or seeing it slaughtered, he wisely chose the lesser evil. As after the disaster which befell the Assyrian oppressor, the face, that is the front, of Burgoyne's army was driven toward the eastern sea; the hinder part was scattered into Canada toward the utmost sea; and, as of old, the stench of his dishonor came up and spread o'er the world.

In Dwight's eyes it was just that these things should be because, as he interpreted the event in the light of Scripture, it had been pride which had been the boasters' undoing. No evil, said Dwight, is more monstrous or more deserving of punishment. In his system men were but worms, and he thought it must astonish the angels to hear such lowly creatures arrogate to themselves the power and wisdom to accomplish those mighty transactions which God alone can perform. And what would God himself think? It is from Him, not from ourselves, that we derive every breath, every morsel of food, every moment of life. It is for men and worms to be humble, to trust, to adore, and to praise their Maker. It should be their business to avoid arrogance which has ruined so many, and to acknowledge gratefully divine providence.

Dwight found further support for his argument in the fact that no land except Palestine had ever enjoyed more divine interpositions than America. He believed that it could only have been a watchful Providence who had united the thirteen colonies in a single effort. It was He who had sent the enemy to the only town where they could have been confined until the colonists were able to provide themselves with materials for carrying on the war. Divine omnipotence had raised up powerful armies with which to resist the foe, and had given the Americans a leader. He had aroused them from moods of discouragement by timely victories at Trenton and Princeton, at Bennington, and now at Saratoga. It was He who

had given into their hands the whole army of General Burgoyne and inflicted one of the worst wounds which British pride had suffered for a century. So, Dwight felt that the latter part of his text could properly be addressed to America: "Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things."

This did not mean that his countrymen could relax their own efforts, secure in the feeling that God would see to everything. On the contrary, Dwight's plea was merely to give the glory to the Lord where it rightfully belonged. Then he emphasized to his hearers that they must not restrict their thanks to words but must live as well as speak His praise. They must hate as well as relinquish sin. They must fill their hearts with love to God and man, their minds with faith in Christ. Mere verbal acknowledgments would be worse than sound without sense; they would be profane and impious mockery. Dwight asserted confidently that to live scripturally was not impossible because if religion were painful or burthensome, mankind would have a plausible pretense for continuing in sin. But to Dwight nothing was more certain than the reverse. Piety, he maintained, was not merely an indispensable duty; it was the source of the highest happiness. It meant harmony with the Father.

Therefore, Dwight exhorted his countrymen by appealing to the great motives of love to themselves, love to their country, and obedience to their Maker. If they wished that peace which passeth understanding, and that future happiness which the heart of man hath not conceived, if they wished for the continuance of the great things which God had already done for their country, he urged them to turn immediately from every false way, to break off their sins by righteousness and their iniquities by repentance. Nothing, Dwight declared, obstructed the deliverance of America but the crimes of the inhabitants. Their greatest enemy was not the British, but sin and the authors of it. If the land were ruined, it would be because of its iniquities. And so Dwight asked his audience: "Which of you, my countrymen, will say he is willing to have a hand in this destruction?"

Dwight concluded his discourse with a vivid prophecy which he firmly believed could be achieved. If Christian faith, repentance, and reformation were widely extended throughout the citizenry,

Dwight foresaw not only success and glory for American arms but also more fundamentally important things. The country's councils would then be fraught with wisdom, firmness and integrity; the seasons would be propitious and the fields luxuriant; the schools would be "nursed" by Heaven; the youth trained to knowledge and virtue; the churches blessed with grace, mercy, and peace; independence and happiness would be fixed upon the most lasting foundations; and that kingdom of the Redeemer which consisteth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, would be durably established on the ruins of the kingdom of Satan.

With such a prospect eloquently held out before them, old campaigners could hardly fail to return to the fight with new determination. General Putnam was said to have been particularly pleased by this sermon, nodding and smiling his approval while Dwight was preaching it, and praising it loudly after the service had been concluded. But, according to one story, Putnam refused to believe there was such a text in the Bible and claimed that Dwight must have manufactured it for the occasion. It was too apt to be true, he thought. Some one found a Bible and convinced him that the chaplain had taken no such liberty with Holy Writ. The General then admitted that the Good Book contained everything, and that Dwight knew exactly where to put his finger on whatever he wanted.

Such resourcefulness was typical of the New England clergy, and Dwight's sermon is a good example of the support which they gave the war. They sanctified it as a holy war in which God was inevitably on the side of right. Through sermons and prayers each Sabbath and by energetic activity during the week, they exercised a profound influence in every hamlet throughout New England. Dwight's discourse, delivered at a moment when war was uppermost in men's minds, and spoken vigorously by an orator with a fine voice and a superior command of language, had a far more powerful effect upon the audience that was his, than we can readily imagine by reading it now in the shelter of a quiet library. Dwight himself later regretted that he had allowed it to be "extorted" from him to be printed even anonymously. He called it a trifling performance, and doubtless in the excitement of the occasion he ut-



tered phrases which he was ultimately sorry to see preserved in cold print. Besides, he wrote it when he was only twenty-five.

Nevertheless, the sermon deserves emphasis because it contained much which was basic in his thought. During succeeding years in calmer circumstances he continued to think along the same lines. In poetry and prose he returned again and again to its principal theme. For him it always remained a fundamental concept that good individuals make good communities, and Providence guards virtue with omnipotent benevolence. His effort on this occasion makes it easy to understand why David Avery could write from the Highlands, "Mr. Dwight . . . shines as one of the first characters in point of composition."<sup>29</sup>

In addition to performing his pulpit duties well, Dwight labored energetically to instruct the men in morals and religion on weekdays as well as on Sunday. More important, they seem to have welcomed his attentions. Apparently no excessively ministerial zeal marred his tactful approach to persons whom he considered in need of religion. He readily conformed to the habits of the camp. Officers and men liked him for his daily conversation and conduct as well as for the manner in which he discharged his appropriate function. Long habits of instructing others and a love of being busy led him to teach some of the younger men in the elements of literature and "science" whenever circumstances permitted. The qualities which had gained him popularity at Yale made him equally well liked in the rough army post at West Point.<sup>30</sup>

During leisure moments he amused himself in simple ways which frequently produced a vivid realization of the horrors of war. One joyous spring day Dwight joined a group of officers in a trip down the river to examine what was left of Forts Montgomery and Clinton after the battle of the previous autumn. Leaving the barge and climbing the bank, he saw at the top of the hill a smoldering fire. Some cottagers had kindled it for the purpose of consuming the unburied bones of soldiers who had been killed in the assault upon the fort in October. The flames had not yet converted all of the gruesome fuel to ashes.

Farther on, the party encountered the stench of decayed human bodies. To Dwight the odor was a "novelty." It came from a pond

where several bodies had been thrown after the battle. The shallow water barely covered some and they were plainly visible. Others had an arm, a leg, or part of the body above the surface. They were clothed in the dress of ordinary farmers, which indicated that they had been militia. Their faces were "bloated and monstrous," their postures distorted. Dwight's companions, calloused veterans, "sustained the prospect with some degree of firmness." But Dwight himself was a novice, and after surveying the scene for a moment, he hastened away. The charred and broken ruins of the two forts only added another melancholy picture to that afternoon's excursion. Dwight also saw a lesson in the unmarked grave of a Polish nobleman who had been aide-de-camp to the British commander, but whose "restless, vain, ambitious life" had thus come to a "humiliating termination." All this Dwight found indescribably depressing.<sup>31</sup>

Casual scenes and incidents started the thoughtful young chaplain meditating upon the sufferings of the civilian population. After divine service one Sabbath early that same spring at West Point, he sought to escape from the distracting bustle of his lodgings at headquarters by climbing Sugar Loaf Mountain near by. From the top there was an extensive view of the surrounding wilderness. As the sun sank behind the western mountains, everything in the dimming light seemed to Dwight to be overcast with the sad, funereal aspect of universal death. Huge cakes of ice floating down the Hudson crashed against the banks making a noise which at first was scarcely audible to the man on the mountain top; but gradually he heard it swell into "the majestic sound of loud thunder" and then slowly die away. As he looked down the deep valley listening to this "natural music" there intruded into the solemn scene a deserted house which had once been the home of a happy family. Knowing that it was empty now because of the war, he mused upon the emotions which would be his were he to see his own home in the same desolate condition. Together with the mild spring day, it reminded him that the campaign was about to reopen in which "a thousand miseries" would be suffered, parents made childless, wives made widows, and children made orphans. He foresaw that "many a house where peace, cheerfulness, and delight, would love to dwell, will probably be reduced to ashes; and many a

family to want and despair." Dwight had no liking for such business.<sup>32</sup>

He was made further aware of these evils because, for part of the time at the Highlands, he was quartered comfortably in the Robinson house which was used by Generals Putnam and Parsons as headquarters. Later it gained notoriety as the scene of Arnold's treason. The building had been the home of Colonel Beverly Robinson, whose wife was a member of the wealthy Philipse family of New York. Before the war the Robinsons had lived on this estate at Philipstown, and everything which could make life agreeable was theirs. The Colonel, an efficient Scot, managed the place himself and enjoyed an ample revenue from the rents. His spacious mansion, located in a beautiful setting, was surrounded by gardens, fields, and orchards which yielded everything possible in the climate. His lady was one of the prizes of the province, their children promising; and their friends were persons of the first consequence in the colony.

The outbreak of the war shattered all this happiness. Colonel Robinson's friends induced him to take the side of the mother country, and he was forced to move his family to New York. His property was confiscated, and the family banished. Exiled from their native country, they eventually took refuge in England. Living in the very house which this family had once occupied so happily, Dwight was continually reminded of their misfortunes. He was not vindictive because the father had seen fit to take the Tory side. He thought of the suffering inflicted upon the innocent members of the family, and felt for them as he would have felt if they had been his own.<sup>33</sup>

Sensitive young clergyman that he was, he learned to hate war as one of the greatest evils to which mankind was subjected, along with pestilence, famine, earthquakes, and wild beasts. He hated it for the savagery it aroused in men. Long afterwards he compared its effects to the emotions which the excitement of the chase caused in a hunter whom he once observed on the shore of Lake George. In that remote frontier region, the natives hunted deer with a simple but effective technique. One man entered the woods with hounds to arouse and drive the prey to the shore of the lake, where a fellow huntsman waited. When the animal crashed through the



trees and took to the water in order to escape pursuit by swimming to the opposite shore, the hunter on watch followed quickly in a light bateau. Rowing faster than the deer could swim, he soon overtook his quarry and dispatched the helpless creature by hitting it over the head with an oar. Then the victor towed his prize back to the beach in triumph.

One day journeying down Lake George, Dwight stopped for a meal with such a hunter who was waiting for a partner to frighten game toward that part of the shore. Suddenly they heard the dogs barking. At the sound the hunter immediately "took fire"; his eye kindled; his voice assumed a lofty tone; his stride became haughty, his manner truculent; his mood changed swiftly from mild sociability to violent excitement, especially to rage when some detail of his preparations was found to be wrong. But when no deer appeared, and his partner arrived with a disappointing confession of having failed to find one, Dwight noticed that the "magnificence" of his companion dwindled in a moment. The fire vanished from his eye, his voice fell to a natural key, and the "hero" shrank into a plain farmer.

The incident made Dwight compare the similarity in the emotions aroused by hunting and by war. He had seen the glitter of arms and the roar of cannon produce the same fierce "agitations" which the sound of the approaching hounds and the expectation of a victim had stirred in this frontier woodsman. Dwight decided that this explained why savages make the chase a substitute for war and a source of glory second only to that acquired in battle; and why "Nimrod and his fellow hunters were speedily changed into warriors, and learned from preying on beasts to fasten upon men." The anarchy of the jungle had no proper place in Dwight's ideology.<sup>34</sup>

Busy preparing sermons, performing his official duties, and yet finding time to write poems and meditate upon the scenes about him, Dwight passed the months at West Point until the summer of 1778. Doomed to spades and shovels, his brigade received news of the progress of the war restlessly. After the British had evacuated Philadelphia, and Lee had acquired his malodorous notoriety at Monmouth, the order finally came in July to join the main army at White Plains. At last they were on the march again; and once

back in Westchester County they could no longer complain about not being in the center of things.

At White Plains there now gathered the largest American force to be assembled in one encampment during the entire war. Washington himself was there, and is said to have honored Dwight with "flattering attentions."<sup>35</sup> Lafayette made it a practice to be present every morning at the parade of the guards, and Dwight saw many other Revolutionary heroes at his new station.

Morale was high, for now there was a real promise of victory. White Plains had once been the scene of demoralizing reverses for the Americans; but now, after two years, the tide seemed to have turned, and it was the British who were on the defensive. D'Estaing and the French fleet were outside New York harbor. Even when the French admiral transferred his activities to Newport, the enemy remained close behind their lines on "York Island" and for the next four months kept Washington guessing as to what the next move would be. There was not much fighting except for the usual skirmishing "between the lines" or an occasional raid across Long Island Sound.

With the arrival of autumn the army divided, each section going into winter quarters at some strategic point. Putnam and Parsons took their Connecticut regiments to Redding, where the men were, in a sense, at home. General McDougall noted a miraculous improvement in the conduct of his troops as soon as they had crossed the New York line into their native state. During the march his Nutmeg warriors distinguished themselves by the extraordinary amount of civilian property which they managed to steal or destroy, and no measures taken by McDougall against looting were of any avail. But after they had crossed the border he found a way of preventing further plunder. He threatened to turn over the transgressors to the civil authorities. The natives knew what they might expect from those unbending officials, and now they also feared for their reputations at home. McDougall wrote that "their countrymen would indeed conclude the Devil was in them if they had conducted as they have done in the army and other places."<sup>36</sup>

His worries on this score were now over. Not a man was found warming himself by a fire of fence rails, or helping himself to a farmer's chickens. In Connecticut, the land of steady habits, such

things were never done.<sup>37</sup> Away from home there had apparently been need for energetic chaplains. But let us hope that General Parsons did not have the same difficulties with the brigade to which Dwight had been so attentive, and that McDougall's troubles were limited to regiments less fortunately supplied with ethical technicians.

At this stage of the war Dwight's army experience came to a sudden end. He did not pass another cold winter with troops made mutinous by poor food, lack of clothes, and no pay. About the first of November the tragic news of his father's death took him back to Northampton to serious personal responsibilities.<sup>38</sup> Then twenty-six years of age, he was the eldest of thirteen children, all of whom were living although only two others had reached the age of twenty-one. The widowed mother, therefore, had a heavy burden to carry, and this more pressing duty compelled Dwight to withdraw from the army. Apparently he intended at first to remain in Northampton only temporarily; but in those troubled times he found it impossible to leave, and "reluctantly" asked General Parsons to appoint a successor.<sup>39</sup>

Dwight always looked back upon his year in the army as one of the most memorable in his life. It was an experience which did more than leave many vivid impressions. It exercised an influence over him which was permanent. At the time that he had enlisted, he was an earnest young clergyman, newly licensed to preach the Gospel and eager to do good in the world. The two great commandments to love God and neighbor formed the basis of his rule of life. He was a student deeply interested in literature, philosophy, and learning. Possessed by a profound patriotism, he left the work he liked, and even his bride, to do what he could for his country. After a year's observation, he naturally emerged from his army experience despising war for what he had seen it do to men's minds and bodies. Its horror had been brought home to him on more than one occasion. But this was not the most important lesson his chaplaincy taught him.

Thirteen months in the army gave Dwight abundant opportunity to know his fellow men under severe tests. He came into contact with all varieties of human character, and, as a chaplain, he was in a position to analyze them more or less objectively. He



formed a wide acquaintance among the officers, a number of whom were prominent in the southern and middle states as well as in New England. He knew personally many of the great figures in the Revolutionary struggle, and observed at first hand the quality of leadership which they, particularly their commander-in-chief, displayed. For a young man as alert as Dwight such contacts were bound to be inspiring and instructive.

He also mingled readily with the rank and file. He saw them off when they climbed into their saddles for a raid into enemy territory, and listened to the stories of those who came back. He watched them under the discipline of military life, during long marches, on guard, at parade, around evening fires, and under the lash of the whipping post. He talked with prisoners condemned to the gallows. Through the cold of a bitter winter he tried to cheer men laboring at heavy tasks for which they had no adequate equipment. He was with them as they solved the problem of transforming a wooded point on the Hudson into an effective barrier against the foe. He noticed how gentlemen and yeomen met the boredom of a lonely outpost. He saw how the war smashed the homes and lives of New York patricians as well as those of the simple farmers who lived "between the lines" in Westchester County.

In later life he referred frequently to these army experiences not merely in ordinary conversational reminiscence but for guidance from what they had taught him. They gave him an inexhaustible supply of illustrations with which to support his arguments, and this fund of fruitful examples, taken from actual observation, always impressed those who knew him, especially the students in his classes after he had become President of Yale. Dwight's year in the army also helped to give him a humanistic angle from which to view the Calvinism of his grandfather. Altogether, that year contributed more perhaps than any other period in his life to mature his judgment and to increase his knowledge of human character and the world. For him, keen observer that he was, it was a rich experience. He did not forget its lessons when he faced other men and other problems.<sup>40</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### Responsibilities in Northampton

IN NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS, where New England standards were strict, the inhabitants respected Major Dwight, Timothy's father, for his faithful adherence to accepted rules. Among his own kind he excelled in discriminating between right and wrong. Instinct as well as reason seemed to lead him inevitably to correct decisions. His unflinching attitude toward the Princeton lottery tickets testifies sufficiently to the superior purity of his honesty. He was steeped in an ethical code which guided him safely and surely through all the Satanic snares which diabolical cunning devised for his downfall. If doubts ever caused him to hesitate, his wife, Mary Edwards, daughter of the code's supreme interpreter, was at hand for helpful consultation. It was not until the American Revolution presented an overwhelming problem in loyalties that their combined Puritanical resolution at last foundered.

When, in 1758, Major Dwight had accepted office as judge of the court of common pleas, he had taken the usual oath, swearing fealty to the British Crown. No one then in Massachusetts, he least of all, dreamed of being anything but loyal to the King. For sixteen years Major Dwight performed the duties of his post with the scrupulous integrity for which he was noted. Those years gradually brought a momentous change in the relations between colony and Crown. When the break finally came, Major Dwight heard the customary strong voice of his Calvinistic conscience and decided that, regardless of every other consideration, he must remain faithful to the oath he had once so solemnly sworn. He had long been bound by it, and he felt that changed conditions did not release him. Yet, he appreciated the patriotic view which his fellow

citizens took toward the issues of the day. Because of this sympathy for the American side of the argument, he refused to take up arms for the King against his native province. On the other hand, his oath made it impossible for him to take up arms for the province against the King. He was, alas, an anomalous paradox, "a loyalist on Christian principle, and yet thoroughly patriotic in his feelings." The horns of a dilemma could not be sharper.<sup>1</sup>

With the outbreak of hostilities Major Dwight's peculiar position became more and more uncomfortable. Crown government in the colony came to an end, and being a leader in the community he was subjected to increasing pressure to take an active part in the cause of patriotism. Committees urged him to recant his apparent Toryism. Mobs threatened all Loyalists without stopping to weigh the merits of their Christian scruples. Once he and some of his Tory-minded friends were forced to spend a few nights in Northampton's new jail, the very monument to law and order which they, as prominent men of the place, had recently taken the lead in erecting. The indignity of being among the first to occupy their own structure seems to have been lessened by the fact that they were permitted to roam at will during the day; and, to ease their nocturnal incarceration, a servant was allowed to bring them liquors and other necessities with which to pass the long evenings. No such alleviated coercion could shake the determination of Major Dwight to do nothing which Providence might construe as a violation of his judicial vows.<sup>2</sup>

He sought to overcome the difficulty by taking a step which, for one of his years and standing, was desperate. He bought a large tract of land near Natchez, far in the southwestern wilderness on the Mississippi River. It was part of a Crown grant made to General Phineas Lyman, who was the husband of Major Dwight's sister Eleanor. In 1774 General Lyman went there to prepare a new home for his family. In the spring of 1776 Major Dwight decided to do likewise. He took with him two of his sons, Sereno and Jonathan, aged twenty-two and seventeen respectively, expecting to make permanent provision for them there. His sister, Mrs. Lyman, and five of her children were in the party, which included several other men, women, and children, all bound for the frontier country. On the banks of the Mississippi they hoped to found a settle-



ment which would duplicate the best features of the one they were leaving behind. Alas, life in their own beloved Connecticut River valley had become too tumultuous.

On May 1, 1776, from the port of Middletown, they set sail down the river, starting a long, hard voyage to New Orleans. Out in the open sea, a British man of war sighted them and gave chase. By darkening their lights and changing their course during the night, they managed to escape. But the danger of meeting an enemy ship was always present, and the necessity of avoiding British ports of call where, in peaceful times, they might have obtained fresh food and water, increased their hardships. Among the happier incidents of the trip, as the ship was sailing up the Gulf of Mexico, one of the passengers, a Mrs. Phelps, made her husband the "joyful" father of a "desirable" son. To commemorate his oceanic birthplace, the Phelpses named the child "Atlantic." Such were the hazards of the voyage. By the end of July, after many dreary weeks at sea, the travelers reached the mouth of the Mississippi and ascended to New Orleans. After resting there, they started up the river in small boats. Navigation was difficult against the swift current, but in September, after a journey of nearly six months, they arrived at their destination.

Troubles then descended upon them in the form of Spaniards, disease, and death. After only a few months Mrs. Lyman died, and on June 10, 1777, her brother, Major Dwight, followed her, a victim of the climate and hardships which even his sturdy body could not withstand. It was over a year before the news of his death reached his wife in Northampton, and it was only after another far more harrowing journey that his two sons returned to tell the full story of their tragic adventure.

While the Revolutionary War raged, the Spaniards, eager to control the key posts of the Mississippi valley, drove the little band of American settlers from their new home. The refugees fled through the forest hoping to reach the safety of the Georgia coast. It was a desperate trek which these families, some with babies and young children, made against many hazards. They used pack and saddle horses, but the rough country compelled them to walk much of the way. They climbed steep mountains, and, when makeshift rafts would not do, the women as well as the men swam their

horses across wide rivers. They roasted turtles for food, and ate whatever game and herbs they found in the wilds of the desolate country. Having lost their compass early in the march, they depended upon the sun to guide them on a course which had to be circuitous because of the war and hostile Indians. They wandered over hundreds of miles, enduring famine, thirst, sickness, cold, and exhaustion. At night savages robbed them of their horses. Wild beasts beset their path. After five months, "almost naked and perfectly Indianized," they reached Savannah.

Timothy's brothers, Sereno and Jonathan, and Sereno's wife, lived to bring home the tale of their bitter experience. But disaster engulfed the Lymans. Both General and Mrs. Lyman had died in Mississippi. Two daughters succumbed to the hardships of the expedition to Georgia. One son became so discouraged by the wreck of the family's hopes that he lost interest in life and sank apathetically into a premature grave. His brothers disappeared and were never heard of again. They were Dwight's first cousins, his boyhood playmates. The tragedy which befell them, and his own father's death, were events which affected him profoundly. While he was still young, he learned the meaning of deep sorrow.<sup>3</sup>

With his father buried in a distant grave, it fell to Timothy, the eldest son, to fill the vacant place. Major Dwight's death was a severe blow to the family fortunes. The Spaniards got possession of the title papers to the Mississippi lands, and the Dwights were never able to make good their claim. In Northampton the widow was left with ten young children to support during times which were the hardest that district had seen for many years. In the troubled war period, substantial citizens of western Massachusetts strove unsuccessfully to avoid financial ruin. Dwight soon saw the necessity of leaving the army permanently, and, with his wife and their small son, who had been born the same year (1778) at Stratford, moved into the homestead where he had spent the happy days of his boyhood. His wife played her part with never failing cheerfulness while he assumed his heavy burden with customary energy and resolution.

There were many difficulties. The stigma of Toryism had fastened upon the family and caused them much suffering. It had driven the father to an early death far from home, and Dwight's

brother Erastus became a tragic victim of its bitterness. He had been a sophomore at Yale when the absence of his father and elder brothers compelled him to leave college and assist at home. The young man, positive and impulsive in character, was strongly British in his sympathies. The authorities ordered him to give up his arms and remain within the limits of the town. Then they accused him of "aiding and comforting" the enemy, and threw him into jail. As he was standing by the latticed window of his cell for air, a brutal guard on the outside took a point-blank shot at him but missed. This inhuman act, coming as a climax to a series of what he considered previous injustices, so infuriated the passionate youth that he became insane. He never fully recovered. For some forty years Erastus Dwight continued to live with the family in Northampton. He was only four years younger than his brother Timothy, who now had this affliction and care added to the load he had to carry.<sup>4</sup>

The more malicious element of the population vented its wrath upon all suspected Tories, and the widow Dwight and her children were not exempt from their fury. "Patriots" burned her fields of grain, drove away her oxen, and, at a time when she could ill afford such losses, did her serious pecuniary damage. Timothy Dwight's younger brother Cecil, born in 1774, always remembered vividly how as a boy he had been afraid to go out into the street alone until he was ten years old. Up to that time he went to school to his mother; but then came the end of the war and saner times, and he was allowed to attend a formal school. His mother, a positive person with strong opinions, had still another grievance against the people of Northampton. She never forgave them for the way they had driven her father, Jonathan Edwards, from his pulpit after he had served them "lovingly" for twenty-three years.<sup>5</sup>

For Dwight it was no easy matter to overcome all this antagonism and to support a large family in the face of it. But he was not embittered by the sad events which had befallen those dearest to him; and because of the force of his personality he was able to win the respect of his fellow townsmen. Indeed, they soon turned to him for leadership. His own patriotism and ability could not be questioned. He accepted the duties of citizenship and was willing



to take an active part in public affairs; but first came his duty to those immediately dependent upon him.

His primary task was to solve the family's economic problems. His father left a large estate in lands, about three thousand acres at Northampton, besides his house, and other property near by. The real estate in Northampton alone was appraised at £4,433, and the personal estate at £134. There were a few debts, but he owed less than was owed to him. However, collection was now difficult. Land could not be sold without large sacrifices because of the depreciated currency. The economic condition of western Massachusetts was chaotic.

All the farmers were hard pressed. In a single year Dwight had to pay, in specie, taxes amounting to £110, although he himself had been obliged to receive the paper currency at its nominal value. He estimated that its real worth was then one-fortieth of the face value, and it soon thereafter depreciated much more. Possessing the thrifty instincts of his New England forefathers, he could never forget that, although he stopped en route at the houses of friends and practiced "strict economy," it cost him five hundred dollars to travel in a chaise with his wife from New Haven to Northampton, a ride of two easy days. Upon the advice of friends but much against his own desires, he sold for the taxes a valuable six-hundred-acre tract in Belchertown which had belonged to his grandfather. He could see no early end of the burdens upon the country and felt compelled to let it go.<sup>6</sup> The general distress was so great that in the spring of 1779 he wrote to his old commander, General Parsons: "Our country here sinks inconceivably, while taxes rise. Without a gift of prophecy, I will venture to foretell that the movement which forces small farmers to sell their real estate for the purpose of paying taxes will produce a revolution."<sup>7</sup> It was an accurate forecast. With a large family to be fed and clothed, Dwight found himself engaged in a disheartening struggle requiring ceaseless effort and all his Yankee ingenuity.<sup>8</sup>

Fortunately, he was both energetic and resourceful. He managed two large farms which his father had left, doing a full day's labor in the fields himself every working day of the week. The

hired men liked his company so much that they competed for the privilege of mowing next to him, "that they might hear him talk." All classes enjoyed his fluent, lively, instructive conversation. Besides running the farms, he increased his income by conducting a school. Between agricultural labors he heard his pupils recite twice daily, once early in the morning and again at eleven o'clock. He had no time to become discouraged.

Busy in the fields and classroom during the week, he found employment on the Sabbath for his ministerial talents. Each Sunday during the winter of 1778-1779 he supplied the vacant pulpit at Westfield. The following year he did the same for the people of Muddy-Brook, a parish of Deerfield; and the year after that he preached to the inhabitants of South Hadley. The congregation of Muddy-Brook always held an honored place in his affections because they paid him not in the depreciated currency of the country but in hard money or its equivalent in bushels of wheat. This did much to help carry his big family through the stringency of that discouraging time. Happily Dwight's health had been strengthened by the open-air life and horseback riding in the army, and he was able to stand the strain. From the farms, the school, and his preaching he managed to earn enough to meet the daily needs of the household. But it required all his strenuous efforts and meant postponing his own establishment.<sup>9</sup>

Besides helping to prevent the sheriff from confiscating family lands and cattle, the school enhanced Dwight's reputation as an educator. He showed his independence of accepted methods by catering to girls as well as to boys. In that age of eighteenth century enlightenment, it was considered an unnecessary extravagance, if not positively dangerous, to bless a female with an education comparable to that bestowed upon males. The feminine intellect was deemed simply incapable of standing it. Girls might profitably acquire skill with a needle, and be taught similar utilitarian functions. It required masculine strength of mind to deal with the higher learning. The idea of collegiate coeducation seemed an innovation full of social peril.

Contrary to the prevailing trend, Dwight believed in giving young ladies the same training as young men. Going a step further, he thought it good to expose both to the process simultaneously.

He dared to teach them the same subjects at the same time. True, he needed pupils for purposes of revenue, but this was not his motive. Genuinely convinced that his method was good, he was willing to venture into fields which were almost untried. Apparently the boys and girls found the unorthodox procedure agreeable. Their parents were so well pleased with the results that more and more entrusted their children to Dwight's care. His academy prospered.

He made such a success of it that he had to employ two ushers to assist him. After graduating from Yale in 1778, Seth Storrs became one of these assistants and stayed for three or four years. Joel Barlow, another graduate of Yale who had been a student at the college while Dwight was a tutor there, also served for a short time, glad of the opportunity to work under such a master. Barlow was then writing his poem, *The Vision of Columbus*, and leaped at the chance to be where he could have Dwight's advice while engulfed in that tremendous effort. The quality of Dwight's pedagogical staff, therefore, was far superior to anything the common schools had to offer. At the end of his five years in Northampton, Dwight's school was recognized as excellent.<sup>10</sup>

Such was its prosperity under his skillful direction that President Ezra Stiles of Yale (Dr. Daggett's successor) feared it as a rival. After the British attack upon New Haven, a number of Yale students, including a large part of one whole class, shifted to Northampton, where they placed themselves under Dwight's instruction. There they were at a safe distance from the coast, and Dwight's popularity as a teacher was well known among the Yale undergraduates. He devoted his immediate attention to these more advanced students until they had completed the regular college course. In New Haven, President Stiles began to develop a strong antipathy for his competitor. Once, after reading Dwight's commencement oration of 1772, Stiles had referred to the author as "certainly an honor to Yale College."<sup>11</sup> Now this friendly attitude changed to hostile suspicion.

There were other causes for friction between the two. In 1777 when Stiles was made President of Yale, Dwight had been mentioned for the post. Some who favored Dwight's election thought the corporation had erred in its decision.<sup>12</sup> The success of his flour-



ishing school in Northampton probably did not allay this feeling, and Stiles was aware of it. Dwight was a New Divinity man in his theological views, while Stiles belonged to the opposing camp of Old Lights. In that period of sober thinking, theological disagreement raised formidable barriers even between laymen. Gentlemen of the cloth prided themselves upon independence of thought, and each was commonly inclined to find more fault in the reasoning of others than in his own.

But the rivalry between the schools seems to have been what bothered Stiles most. He could not watch an ex-tutor take students away from Yale and remain unmoved. He became much concerned over a movement to establish a school at Bennington, Vermont, because the founders hoped their infant institution might grow into a college, and for that reason wanted to make Dwight its head. While negotiations were progressing, Stiles noted the plan in his diary with apprehension; but, doubtless to his relief, the scheme never materialized.<sup>13</sup> He also suspected Dwight of being connected with another project to establish a school nearer at hand in Connecticut itself.<sup>14</sup> But for the time being Dwight remained in Northampton, where his success caused the Yale President sufficient alarm.

Stiles' remarks lead one to think that the competition for students must have been as keen as it is today between modern American preparatory schools. The few brief entries in his diary, where Stiles occasionally recorded the names of students who withdrew from Yale to go to "Mr. Dwight" at Northampton, give the impression that he was not so much grieved at their treacherous desertion as angry at what he supposed to be the cause of it. In 1780 he thought Dwight and Dwight's friends were maneuvering to "decoy" as many as twenty or thirty upper-classmen from New Haven, but after the crisis had passed he rejoiced that the enemy had succeeded in luring away only seven sophomores, which he considered a paltry victory.<sup>15</sup> The next year Stiles believed Dwight was plotting to secure a professorship in Yale. A rumor that the latter's friends were talking of raising a subscription for that purpose startled him, and he decided that Dwight was "waiting for the meditated stroke upon College."<sup>16</sup>

How much foundation there may have been for Stiles' suspicions, and whether Dwight felt toward Stiles as Stiles felt toward

him, it is impossible to tell. In his diary Stiles is at times obviously, even grossly, unfair to Dwight, and the manuscript evidently contained several passages which Stiles himself seems later to have erased and torn out because he did not want others to see them.<sup>17</sup> President Stiles eventually bequeathed these journals to his successor, and possibly as time went on he foresaw that Dwight might well be the man who would fill that position. That may have been why he removed the sharp passages; or perhaps he regretted having written them. Dwight was certainly ambitious, and he was more aggressive than Stiles; but that he should scheme against his own college or attempt to supplant Stiles at Yale seems quite unlikely. He was busy in Northampton supporting his mother and brothers and sisters as well as his wife and children. He had no taste for such conspiracies.

Public affairs near at home also absorbed him. During those troubled days in western Massachusetts, the community needed wise leadership. Dwight's voice was heard regularly in town meetings. He served on committees, and was chosen repeatedly to represent Northampton in numerous county conventions then being held in a desperate search for some method of relieving the economic distress of the region. Dwight thoroughly understood the burdens under which he and his fellow farmers of Hampshire and Berkshire counties were suffering. Only too familiar with the evils of a depreciated currency, he resisted the unsound schemes and riotous spirit of the more violent elements of the population. Many hard-pressed debtors demanded that the courts be closed; some fomented insurrection. Dwight worked for order and sanity.<sup>18</sup>

When the state Constitutional Convention drew up a new frame of government and, in 1780, submitted their handiwork to the people, Northampton debated the matter at length. In addition to arguments on street corners and over dinner tables, four town meetings were held in a single month that spring. At the first of these Dwight was appointed a member of a committee to consider the new constitution and report at the next meeting what action they deemed proper for the town to take toward it. The committee recommended that the constitution should be changed in several particulars, and, after due consideration, the town voted to submit their proposals to the state Convention.

It fell to Joseph Hawley to put these amendments into written

form. In his draft Hawley incorporated ideas with which other leaders disagreed. If Dwight's attitude was the same at this time as it was later, he, for example, doubtless opposed strenuously his friend's liberal suggestion in favor of religious disestablishment. But Hawley's influence was so powerful that, as usual, he carried the local citizenry with him even on this controversial point. The town adopted his amendments as he had drawn them, and sent the document to the state Convention. There his arguments proved less persuasive. On the whole, however, Hawley and Dwight seem to have worked together for what they probably believed to be the best form of government then obtainable. Doubtless they did much to secure its acceptance by the people of Hampshire County, one of the most important counties in the state at that time. Dwight did his part in helping to build a firm government on a sound democratic basis.<sup>19</sup>

When the new machinery had been set up, he continued to work for the same end by serving as his town's representative in the state legislature for two years in succession, in 1781 and 1782. He accepted this task not from a desire to have a fling at public life but from a sober sense of responsibility. In those tumultuous years many questions of vital importance faced the citizens of Massachusetts and their new government. Since British control was gone, old institutions had to be adapted to the new conditions. Foundations had to be laid, law and order maintained, and, above all, some route to economic prosperity had to be found. It was a work into which Dwight entered sincerely and wholeheartedly.

He was a young minister-schoolmaster-farmer with no experience in the tough game of politics; but, with his extraordinary power of gaining influence in any group, he soon made an impression upon his legislative colleagues. He was an energetic worker as well as an effective speaker. The older members of a committee which was appointed to revise the system of state taxation chose him chairman because it was an arduous post involving labor which they wanted to avoid. But they must have had confidence in his ability before entrusting such an important position to a young man new to the ways of legislatures. Dwight dodged neither responsibility nor work. Caleb Strong, a fellow townsman then prominent in the legislature and later governor of the state, after-



wards remembered him as "a very useful and efficient member."<sup>20</sup>

While in the Massachusetts legislature, Dwight, an ardent Yale man, also distinguished himself by rendering a distinct service to Harvard. The cause of education was naturally dear to him. A petition for a grant to the college at Cambridge came before the legislature. Such appropriations were unpopular, and the financial condition of the state was so bad that the request was presented at a sadly inopportune time. The house took the matter under consideration at a moment when Dwight was absent, and with only a few feeble words spoken in its favor it was quickly defeated. After Dwight had taken his seat and learned what had happened, he moved a reconsideration of the vote. His request being allowed, he made an hour's impromptu speech full of wit, argument, and convincing eloquence, urging the grant. To much applause from both members and spectators, he brought his colleagues around to his way of thinking. They voted unanimously to let Harvard have what Dwight said she deserved. The officers and friends of that respectable institution expressed their gratitude in glowing terms, but it was not until nearly thirty years later—long after he had proved his worth in other ways—that, perhaps a bit triumphantly, he traveled to Cambridge for an honorary degree.<sup>21</sup>

Dwight's success as a legislator brought him more immediate recognition in a form which might have led him into the larger field of national politics, had he so desired. In the winter of 1782–1783 the other representatives from Hampshire County gathered together to select a candidate for the Continental Congress. They chose Dwight unanimously and agreed to exert their combined influence to secure his election, if he would run. A committee tried to persuade him. His chance of success was doubtless good. A popular campaign was not necessary as the post was then the gift of the legislature. His Hampshire colleagues were eager to support him. Influential members of both houses assured him of their aid, and strongly urged him to let them push his candidacy. Senator Samuel Phillips, Jr., of Andover, his intimate friend and fellow lodger, who later became Lieutenant Governor, was especially insistent that he should remain in public life. But Dwight refused.

He decided to give up politics for the ministry. This was the career he had selected before the war had altered his plans. He

felt that it was a higher calling and a field in which he could be the most useful. Such service, he thought, would make for the greatest happiness. Like his father, who had shunned a law career for fear of being engulfed by its temptations, Dwight disliked politics because, for one thing, it involved the danger of sacrificing principles for the sake of party spirit. Wrangling and office seeking were distasteful to him, and he had been thoroughly diverted from his former interest in law. But it is understandable that he should have been drawn temporarily into public life and tempted to remain in it. He had a natural aptitude for it. His father and grandfather and their fathers before them had all been officeholders and active in community affairs. Dwight, too, was always keenly interested in such matters. But, for his daily round, he preferred his chosen profession. The nation might well have used this versatile clergyman.<sup>22</sup>

He had not allowed his legislative duties to interfere with his ministerial intentions. While attending the sessions in eastern Massachusetts, he took advantage of opportunities to preach from time to time in Boston and neighboring towns. Some of the congregations who heard him were so impressed that they tried to persuade him to settle as their pastor and made him "flattering" offers. Both Beverly and Charlestown invited him, and one of these held out the additional inducement of a possible professorship at Harvard. But Boston and Harvard were not to have him.

In May, 1783, he was called by a unanimous vote of the church and congregation to Greenfield Hill, a parish in Fairfield, Connecticut, where he must have preached occasionally some time before. This was nearer his beloved Yale, not far from New York City, and closer to the home of his wife. Conditions in Northampton had improved so that he felt his mother could now get along without him. From Greenfield Hill he could return readily for visits and whenever she might need him. He had two children himself now, and after five strenuous years in the crowded house at Northampton, he and his wife must have been eager for a home of their own. So, looking forward to a happy pastorate, on July 20, 1783, he wrote to the people at Greenfield accepting their call.<sup>23</sup>

He had done his duty to his mother splendidly. When the world seemed to be collapsing around her, he had been her support. With

her he shared every burden. He helped her train and educate his brothers and sisters who, from the oldest to the youngest, loved, obeyed, and looked upon him more as a father than as a brother. Such was the care and devotion he daily manifested toward them. Even his mother displayed the same profound respect for him. To her he was always genuinely affectionate and faithful. They had been close companions since his earliest boyhood, and these last five trying years when they faced responsibilities together made the bond all the stronger. She ever afterwards acknowledged with the deepest gratitude her debt to him, although he owed as much to her.<sup>24</sup>

The two resembled each other in many ways. According to one who knew her well, Mary Edwards Dwight was "a strong-minded woman" who possessed "quite superior instincts and habits of analytic thought."<sup>25</sup> She was an alert observer and keen in her analysis of men and things. Like other Edwardses she had an energetic, impulsive nature which did not lend itself to easy self-control. Her preconceptions and prejudices were strong, and she expressed them with unhesitating firmness.

On one occasion when she suddenly noticed that the children from next door were playing in the Dwight yard, she threw open a window and called out to her neighbor: "Mrs. Lyman! Your boys tread down the grass in our lot!" Mrs. Lyman, a meek lady always anxious to say the proper thing, replied apologetically: "Madame Dwight, if they have done it, they have done very wrong." To which Madame Dwight exploded indignantly: "Did I not tell you that they had done it?" Whereupon Mrs. Lyman hastily retreated in confusion from the disquieting scene, and the boys fled to the comforting protection of old "Lil," the negro slave whose understanding sympathy and broad apron consoled them whenever the vicissitudes of life became overwhelming. One of these small sinners, looking back long afterwards upon similar misadventures, remembered Madame Dwight as "a small woman of mercurial make," notable in his youthful eyes for being very particular about seeing that her orders were obeyed as well as for her surprising fear of thunderstorms. During those distressing moments she would take refuge with her children upon a feather bed until the lightning ceased and the thunder rumbled no more. All else



Madame Dwight faced with confident determination; only the fury of nature alarmed her.<sup>26</sup>

Toward things divine she was profoundly reverent. As in Timothy, she early implanted in the minds of all her children the "elements of vital piety." After her father had been forced from his pulpit in Northampton, she was the one member of the Edwards family who continued to live in the town. But she never became reconciled to those inhabitants who, she thought, had treated her father with shameful injustice. His view of the evils resulting from the Half-Way Covenant form of church membership was also her view. She felt so strongly on the whole matter that each Sabbath she refused to advance into her father's old meetinghouse beyond the vestibule. There in the "belfry" where the bell ringer stood she occupied a chair inside the doors and within sight of the pulpit but outside the audience chamber of the church proper. She adjusted her scruples with nice precision. On communion days she traveled by horseback on a pillion behind one of her sons to Norwich (now Huntington) twelve or more miles distant. There she could partake of the Lord's Supper with people whose theological opinions coincided with her own, and she found the atmosphere so much more congenial that in 1783 she transferred her membership to that church. Small towns seldom breed a spirit of tolerance, and Mary Edwards Dwight was not a person given to compromise.<sup>27</sup>

Theology was a favorite topic of conversation between her and her eldest son. Both wandered readily in the higher reaches of the limitless region of metaphysical thought. Possessing equally independent minds, they did not always agree on controversial points. In frequent skirmishes they expressed their opinions with frank and fluent earnestness. Each was punctiliously polite to the other, for both had been trained in the "moral value and beauty" of good manners. Whether in her own home or in his, she always addressed him as "Sir," and toward her he took scrupulous care to observe the amenities with proper dignity. No matter how emphatic their discussions might become, neither would ever interrupt a protracted speech by the other. Fortunately both used snuff. When one stopped to take a pinch, the other would seize the opportunity to expound his side of the argument. His right to do so was

patiently respected until a similar break afforded an opening for rebuttal. Thus it was that Dwight doubtless clarified his thinking on many important aspects of Edwardian dogma. His mother, saturated in her father's doctrines, could hold her own with the most abstruse theologians. Then in her early forties, she was at the full vigor of her powers. She lived to a ripe age, dying at seventy-three in the winter of 1807. At that time Dwight was President of Yale. He hurried from New Haven to Northampton, and upon returning from the grave remarked to his sister: "All that I am and all that I shall be, I owe to my mother."<sup>28</sup>

Those five years with her at Northampton were full of sorrow and struggle. He wrote to his old commander that he had "grown twenty years older" because "toil and anxiety bring a man down faster than his proportion."<sup>29</sup> In the face of many personal afflictions and at a time of almost hopeless economic stress, he had taken his father's place as head of the family and carried them through a period of calamity. The responsibility and effort brought home to him the lessons of Calvinistic thrift which his parents had early instilled in him. He solved the family's economic problems by hard work, striving not for wealth but to preserve the substantial middle-class independence which had always been theirs. His love of teaching found an outlet in his school which flourished so successfully under his management that its competitive potentialities even alarmed the Reverend President of Yale.

During this period Dwight also gained a knowledge of practical politics which only active participation could give. In town and county meetings, in the state legislature, at the beginning of a new era in American government, he displayed a promise which might well have led him into a career of national prominence. Instead, he chose the ministry. All these diversified activities formed an experience which familiarized him with human hardships and problems, individual and collective. After a variety of strenuous effort for a man of thirty-one, he was to settle at Greenfield Hill, where he could follow peacefully the pursuits which most interested him. In that pleasant spot he was to crystallize his thought and expand his reputation.

## CHAPTER V

### Greenfield Hill

ALTHOUGH HE SOON attained a position of prominence among his clerical brethren, at Greenfield Hill Dwight led the quiet life of a typical New England clergyman. It was a rural parish but, in proportion to its area, one of the most populous in Connecticut. The congregation numbered one thousand souls scattered over a tract fifteen miles square. In the central village, on high ground, a dozen or more houses clustered about a pleasant green. There stood the church, with its spire visible above the trees for miles around. Most of Dwight's parishioners were hardy Yankee farmers who tilled a soil fertile for that section of America, and lived the simple, honorable lives of their Puritan ancestors. They were thrifty workers, intelligent and godly. They welcomed their new minister enthusiastically and never regretted the selection.<sup>1</sup>

In such communities the local pastor still occupied a position almost as elevated as in the days of those zealous settlers who first planted churches in the New England wilderness. On the Sabbath he spoke from the pulpit with awful authority. During the week his word carried weight because his opinions were those of a man respected for superior intelligence and knowledge. The clergyman was a person of education whose training supposedly fitted him to cope with all kinds of problems. Most of his flock had probably never been able to enjoy the advantages which had been his. They went to him for correct interpretations of troublesome passages in Scripture, of course, but also to learn how to combat measles, how to raise better beans, and how to solve the pressing political problems of village, state, and nation. The latter were issues in which all citizens of the new republic were then vitally interested. The influence of a strong-minded pastor was often decisive in the life



of the small towns of eighteenth century New England. Dwight was such a shepherd of his flock.

He exercised an influence quite out of proportion to the size of the salary they paid him. Then, as now, clergymen had to be satisfied with the spiritual rather than the material rewards of their calling. Dwight fared better than most. The people of Greenfield Hill invited him there on what, for that time, were unusually liberal terms. They offered him the princely sum of five hundred dollars a year "so long as he shall continue our minister." There was no intention of ever raising it. If he remained for life, as all expected, he could never look forward to having more than the stipend now agreed upon. But to help him establish his new home, they granted him a "settlement" of one thousand dollars, to be paid in equal annual installments during the first three years of his residence. He also was to have the "use and improvement" of six acres of parish land, besides forty loads (about twenty cords) of "good wood" each year that he held office.<sup>2</sup> In that era this munificent offer would have attracted any young minister seeking a parish.

Today five hundred dollars per year seems sufficiently small for even a clerical budget. To Dwight it was flattering. Few of his colleagues, especially those with country churches, received so much. Writing of the situation thirty years later, Dwight noted sadly that the average clergyman's compensation, in Connecticut, still did not exceed four hundred dollars, including perquisites.<sup>3</sup> On less, many contrived to feed and clothe eight or ten children and send their sons through college. How they managed it is a mystery of economic wizardry now unfathomable.

Dwight's relatively high salary is, therefore, significant. The times were hard. During the Revolution Greenfield Hill had not felt the full fury of British raiders who burned Fairfield and near-by towns along the shore; but it had not escaped entirely. Once, when marching to Danbury on an errand of destruction, the enemy had visited the town. Over the main issues of the conflict, as elsewhere, the inhabitants had been divided. Tories guided the foe where he pleased. When, by day, the "Whigs" set up a Liberty Pole around which to drink confusion to George III and hurrah for Liberty, the Loyalists cut it down at night, even after the patriots had plated the bottom with iron. Peace did not bring immediate prosperity, nor

reduce the cost of living at once. The country had yet to solve the problem of a depreciated currency, and organize a stable government. Trying times were still ahead. In the face of postwar conditions, the generosity of the Greenfield Hill congregation reflects the piety and importance of the parish, as well as the esteem in which they held their new pastor. It augured well for a happy pastorate.<sup>4</sup>

Other circumstances likewise made the prospect promising. His call had been voted unanimously. True, three or four cautious conservatives had cast negative ballots on petty questions of financial detail; but they formed such a miserly minority that their dissonant voices were easily drowned in the prevailing harmony. Dwight found the unanimity and friendliness of the call so "agreeable," and the proposals so "handsome," that he accepted cheerfully.<sup>5</sup>

The solemn ordination was performed at Greenfield Hill on November 5, 1783. No doubt the church was crowded with parishioners, friends, relatives, and ministers, all eager to give the young man from Massachusetts a cordial reception. No fewer than six clergymen participated in the ceremonies. The Reverend Mr. Mitchel opened the service with an introductory prayer; the Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards, Jr., preached the ordination sermon with a distinction surpassing even his habitual eloquence; the Reverend Mr. Eliot prayed at the laying on of hands; the Reverend Mr. Camp delivered the charge; the Reverend Mr. Lewis extended the right hand of fellowship; and finally the Reverend Mr. Murdock offered the closing prayer.<sup>6</sup> For all it was a memorable occasion.

There was only one seriously discordant note. The Greenfield Church belonged to the consociation of churches in the western district of Fairfield County. On the day preceding the ordination this council of clergy, elders, and deacons, had met at Greenfield Hill for the customary preliminaries. Before them were laid the votes by which the Church and Society had made choice of Mr. Dwight, his acceptance of the call, and the testimony of the local ministerial association approving the whole business. All this was according to formula, but there came also a surprising remonstrance signed by "a number of the inhabitants of Greenfield" urging the consociation not to proceed with the ordination of Mr. Dwight on

the ground that he held religious tenets which the remonstrants alleged to be unscriptural.

In view of this charge the council proceeded to examine Dwight as to his "views and designs" in entering the work of the ministry, his qualifications therefor, his knowledge of and belief in the doctrines of the Christian religion, particularly in respect to those doctrines and practices mentioned in the protesting remonstrance. What these doctrines and practices were is unknown, for unfortunately the remonstrance itself is not among the available records. But when the council asked Dwight whether he approved and would settle upon the same religious constitution as the other ministers of the district, that is the Saybrook Platform, he fully agreed. Apparently satisfied, the council then voted to proceed with the ordination. Thus overruled, the remonstrants evidently became reconciled in time. Upon more intimate acquaintance with the object of their suspicions they may well have come to regret their hasty action. The ministers and churches of the Fairfield West district were long blessed with a firm and uniform orthodoxy which heresy seldom disturbed. It was irony, indeed, that Dwight, soon the recognized champion of that orthodoxy, should have had his own doctrinal soundness questioned.<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty probably arose over the troublesome question of the Half-Way Covenant. According to one witness, the church at Greenfield Hill had fallen into "Arminian" tenets and practices, receiving into the church persons who could make no claim to conscious regenerative change, and admitting their children to baptism, according to the Half-Way Covenant plan.<sup>8</sup> This was a matter over which Dwight's grandfather had come to a grievous parting with his congregation in Northampton. Jonathan Edwards had revived the idea of an exclusively regenerate church membership, and his "New Divinity" followers had continued the attack upon all departures from it. Dwight's mother took as uncompromising a view of the question as her father had done. Her brother, the Reverend Jonathan Edwards, Jr., Dwight's theological teacher, refused to accept the pastorship of the North Church at New Haven unless the people there renounced the Half-Way Covenant practice.<sup>9</sup> On this point Dwight's opinion must have been equally clear.



While preaching as a candidate, he evidently explained carefully to the people the theological doctrines upon which he based his own faith. There could be no charge that he had not made his position plain before coming to live there. In his letter accepting the call to Greenfield, he consented to settle with that church and people "on the plan, & according to the principles I have uniformly delivered to you, particularly in two sermons, the one from Acts 20:26 & 27; the other from the First Corinthians 7:14."<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, if these two sermons were written in full, they are apparently no longer extant. But the texts furnish a hint as to their content: the first, from Acts, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God"; the second, from Corinthians, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, & the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." Although it is impossible to reconstruct these sermons merely from the texts, he apparently went to the heart of important doctrines upon which there might be serious dispute.

Dwight, we know, always opposed the Half-Way Covenant on the familiar grounds of New Divinity theology; but perhaps he profited by the unpleasant experience of his eminent grandfather, for he managed the problem much more adroitly. Once established in Greenfield, he convinced without antagonizing, until at last he won the whole congregation to his view. In the words of one who knew him well, he "had the pleasure of seeing these mischievous tenets gradually eradicated, and superseded by the sound and wholesome principles of consistent Calvinism."<sup>11</sup> Dwight gained his victory without causing a schism.

Although firm in his own opinion, he was not so unbending as to refuse to yield when yielding did no harm. Unlike his mother, he did not regard the Half-Way Covenant as sufficient reason for refusing to commune with a church which practiced it. He felt no inconsistency in administering communion at the church in Stamford where the lax standard prevailed.<sup>12</sup> Rather than shun those who differed from him, he preferred to convert them to his way of thinking. As time went on, he played a leading part in bringing about the gradual abolition of the Half-Way plan among many

churches throughout New England and elsewhere. A follower regarded this as one of Dwight's greatest contributions because to New Divinity believers the recovery of churches from this dangerous laxity in doctrine and discipline was a great reformation in which the stake was the salvation of souls. They listed it as one of the outstanding services which Dwight rendered to the cause of "truth and righteousness." It was only natural that he should begin the work in his own church at Greenfield Hill.<sup>13</sup>

The Reverend Jonathan Edwards, the younger, seems to have had these controversial matters in mind when he preached the sermon at Dwight's ordination. Edwards was a fitting choice for this office. He was the uncle and theological tutor of the new pastor. More than that, he was recognized not only as the bearer of a great name but as one of the leading divines of the day in his own right. In view of his well known opinions on the Half-Way Covenant issue, it was peculiarly appropriate and significant that Edwards should have been selected to advise the young minister and the congregation now committed to his care. He chose for his subject *The Faithful Manifestation of the Truth, the proper and immediate End of preaching the Gospel*. As impressive as the title itself, the discourse contained matter which both pastor and people must have taken deeply to heart. Since it is an excellent revelation of the then widely held conception of ministerial responsibility, to which Dwight himself sincerely subscribed, the sermon is worth considering in some detail.

Edwards counseled the newly installed minister to preach the whole truth. That he would preach nothing but the truth was an obvious assumption; but the danger against which Edwards warned was the possibility that he might be tempted into preaching only doctrines which would please his audience, omitting those which might displease. He must teach explicitly the hard as well as the agreeable aspects of the great doctrines of human depravity, the immutability of God's eternal decrees, the necessity of regenerating grace, and the absolute divine sovereignty in dispensing that grace. These dogmas might not always gladden the hearts of influential members of a congregation, for Calvinism admittedly contained much which made guilty sinners despair of their ultimate destination. Since a minister depends upon his flock for his daily

bread, it was all too easy for one of weaker clay to explain the Scriptures in the most pleasing manner possible, to make the "most pungent and mortifying truths" tolerable by means of vague generalizations which would offend no one. It was a pastor's first duty to preach not the consolations of the gospel alone but also "the terrors of the law."

To do otherwise was to impart error instead of truth. For example, a minister might fill many sermons with much about the goodness and mercy of God and fail to make his hearers realize that divine goodness consists in promoting not the good of the individual but the general good of the whole cosmos as well as the glory of the Creator. The distinction was profound, and a pastor who misled his people into a belief that God seeks and will secure the happiness of each individual, taught a comforting error, not the terrible truth. There were other pitfalls. If a clergyman preached the efficacy of faith without explaining the real nature of it, his congregation might fall into the equally fatal mistake of thinking that the justifying faith intended by the gospel is "a mere assent of the understanding" rather than "a right temper" or "reconciliation" of the heart. Emphasis upon good works might persuade the unperceiving that the promises of the gospel are unconditional; that justification is within the reach of all who follow that simple formula. Repentance which is mere dread of punishment must be carefully distinguished from that which arises from a deep and genuine sense of the vileness of sin. Too often, complained Edwards, preachers talked of holiness without making clear whether it consists solely in external morality or rather in love to God and man and the obedience which arises from that love. In various ways such as these he who was content to preach agreeable generalities or partial truths might undermine and pervert the divine message. The whole truth was vital because the salvation of souls depended upon it.

This, the salvation of men "in a way that is subservient to the divine glory," was the end of all preaching, according to Edwards. Men, he said, had to be drawn by instruction and persuasion into the way which led toward heaven. Although he admitted that all the rational and scriptural arguments often fail to lead stubborn mortals to repentance, Edwards maintained that by persevering



in preaching the whole truth a clergyman might move a sinner's innermost conscience to approve right and condemn wrong. This was an influence toward correct conduct and a restraint upon bad. Of course, it was not to be supposed that even a faithful manifestation of the truth could convert the soul. Only divine power could accomplish that. But, argued Edwards, since a conviction of sin and an awakening of the conscience usually preceded conversion, in so far as the preaching of truth led to such an awakening, it made more probable the actual attainment of grace. In this sense, he said, preaching helped to accomplish its ultimate aim, the salvation of souls.

To make himself most effective as an instrument in this great work, Edwards urged Dwight to be diligent in his own search for truth. His preaching must stand the scrutiny of Providence itself, and the search for truth was no simple process. It required countless hours of the most arduous labor. Furthermore, to his credit, Edwards maintained:

Improvement is by no means at an end; and those men err exceedingly, who lament that they live in this late period of the world, wherein improvement and science have been anticipated, and there is no room left for further discoveries. There is abundant room for discovery and improvement in every science, especially in theology.

Edwards pointed out that no man knows the truth perfectly or fails to mix it with error. Indeed, no man could ever discover the answer to every question because God is infinite and therefore cannot be known perfectly by mortal beings nor even by the angels themselves. Granted that the canon of Scripture is complete and no further revelations are to be expected, said Edwards, there is still much obscurity to be dispelled if truth is to be brought to light. As the endless search continues, many new truths now contained in the word of God but not yet seen will be disclosed. As men gain in this knowledge, they will see more and more clearly and progress steadily toward still greater discoveries. So, Edwards urged his pupil, whom he knew to be devoted to "science and improvement" and to theology above all other sciences, always to apply himself with vigor and perseverance to his studies.

Theology was a field in which his utmost abilities would have

full play. There was no excuse for preparing a few sermons and then never writing any others. By reading, by conversation, by reflection, he must continually increase his stock of knowledge. Correspondence with men of thought and literature might make it possible often to acquire in a short time what had cost others years of reading and reflection. Nor should he ever hesitate to grapple with the most difficult problems, for if he should become content to survey the simple subjects only, he would soon cease all study. Naturally, if he were to accomplish his purpose, he must also husband his time carefully and methodically. Only thus could his preaching be most useful.

Nor should he be content to teach only through his sermons. Other means were available and should be used. He should make the most of opportunities provided by private conversation to solve the problems of individual members of his congregation, to remove their doubts and objections, to consult with them regarding their spiritual interests, their sanctification, their sense of security, their conviction of sin, their despair and their hopes. Conferences with the young people of the parish would be particularly important because often there was more chance to benefit them than there was to help their elders who had grown hard in the ways of iniquity. In any case, the young were the hope of the flock.

Another method of emphasizing true doctrine was through the administration of church discipline—admonition, confession, excommunication. At times this duty might be disagreeable; but it was necessary and divinely instituted. Therefore, no matter how unpopular his action might be, he must never shun what he knew to be profitable for his people. That much about his task would be unpopular in the carnal hearts of men was to be expected because it condemned them to eternal death and cut off their hope of future felicity. But to awaken the consciences of his hearers was the best defense against opposition. In this regard Edwards gravely warned Dwight to avoid the temptation to use "flattery," since inevitably some of his people, especially those near death, would wish to be comforted. At all times he must tell them only truth, the whole truth. More difficult, he must himself be an example of all the earthly virtues to those under him, honest and faithful in

his own daily conduct as well as in the execution of his official ministerial functions.

To fail in any of these things meant that he would defraud the congregation not merely of the salary they paid him but of the "sincere milk of the word, the bread of life." He would defraud God of that service which is His indispensable due, and he would defraud himself of the reward of a faithful servant. Although his stipend would probably never be increased, this should never deter him from the steady performance of his duty to his utmost ability. He was to enjoy a higher salary than most clergymen received, and one did not undertake the ministry merely in order to make a living out of it. Money was not the reward to be sought. An opportunity lay before him to be an instrument for diffusing knowledge of the gospel, for saving souls, for the glorifying of the Heavenly Father. By being a faithful watchman ever ready to warn his people against danger, he might save many "which being plucked as brands out of the fire, and made heirs of eternal happiness, will be the trophies of your victorious fidelity." If at the end it could be said of him, "Well done, good and faithful servant," the same glorious eternal reward might, too, be his. The motives for "victorious fidelity" were clear. No work could be more noble.

Edwards closed his address with an exhortation to the congregation, pointing out to them that if the faithful manifestation of the truth was Dwight's duty, theirs was to hear and obey it, and to assist their pastor in the discharge of his responsibility. Edwards lauded the generosity of the financial support which they had promised their new pastor as a splendid example to other churches and an indication of the cooperation which Dwight might expect at Greenfield Hill. Finally, reminding his hearers that without an honest life they were not Christians, Edwards commended them all to God.<sup>14</sup>

His sermon is significant because it presents a theological and clerical standard typical of the time and place. It was a standard which Dwight himself always attempted to achieve. From the day of his ordination he followed the Edwardean plan scrupulously. As the years went by, his relationship with the people of Greenfield became closer and more affectionate, for they did their part



too. The twelve years that he remained among them were profitable for both pastor and congregation.

As a preacher Dwight already had a local reputation. At Greenfield Hill it became national. His church was in a small country village, but, as the fame of its pastor spread, visitors from far and near were attracted to it. Travelers hurrying along the post road between New York and Boston interrupted their journeys to hear him. Important urban pulpits offered nothing better.<sup>15</sup>

They found that Dwight never shunned the "hard" doctrines but taught the whole truth clearly, as Edwards would have had him. He agreed that a minister should preach so as to call attention not to his own oratorical talent but to the truth he was preaching. Yet, such was the quality of Dwight's eloquence that it could not fail to be noticed and admired. Because of his weak eyes, it was impossible for him to write his sermons in full. He had to deliver them extemporaneously, which, instead of being a handicap, proved to be an advantage. It improved his fluency not to be tied to a manuscript as were most preachers of that era. Before going to Greenfield, Dwight had committed to paper only a very small number of sermons, and during his twelve years there, he wrote probably fewer than twenty. But in that time he preached twice on Sundays, lectured on Wednesdays, and delivered numerous discourses on miscellaneous occasions. He must have preached well over a thousand sermons during his residence in Greenfield. Yet, his mind was so active that he never had to resort to repeating a few gems preserved in the clerical barrel.

His method of composition indicates his rare power of concentration. During the week he went over each sermon in his mind at what he considered free moments—while hoeing in his garden, while astride his horse between calls on parishioners and visits to the sick, and whenever his busy round permitted. By the end of the week he had written not a word, but he had all the material planned, organized, and digested. When the Sabbath came, his two sermons were ready. On Sunday morning and again in the afternoon, between the ringing of the bells (an interval of an hour before the service began), he jotted down a brief outline of the principal points he wished to make. This required only a few minutes, for he wrote quickly in abbreviated language, using a single letter

or syllable for a word. He got it all on a quarter- or half-sheet of paper which he held in his hand. Although he referred to his outline occasionally, he depended upon the inspiration of the moment for the body of his sermon and the language he used. Never hesitating, never at a loss for a word, he usually preached from three-quarters of an hour to an hour. He spoke rapidly but with a clear enunciation and careful regard to emphasis. Free from gestures and theatrics, his manner was dignified and impressive. He was always in complete command of the subject, and his confidence carried conviction. The Reverend Heman Humphrey, a competent critic who listened to many of his sermons, called Dwight one of the most eloquent preachers that he had ever heard or "that the country has produced."<sup>16</sup>

Because Dwight's best efforts were almost wholly extemporaneous, it is difficult for a modern reader to recapture the mood and effect they produced in that day. One who heard his sermon on *The Harvest Past*, which was credited with starting two revivals of religion, said Dwight's delivery was earnest and impassioned, his language "pungent and emphatic," and the whole discourse unusually "solemn and impressive." But when the sermon was later printed, it lacked the power it had possessed when delivered. Stimulated by the time, place, and circumstances of the occasion, habitually fluent and self-possessed, Dwight reached heights of eloquence which it was impossible even for him to regain on the written page.<sup>17</sup> But their force is obvious.

During a religious revival, he once preached a discourse which he had written in advance, but the circumstances of the revival so excited him that when he had finished the prepared sermon, he added a peroration as though it had been the conclusion which he had planned. This was the most moving part of the discourse, and a "respectable" gentleman who heard it, afterwards asked permission to see the manuscript, explaining that it was only the conclusion which he wanted to read because he considered it the most eloquent he had ever heard. Much to his surprise he learned that it was the only part of the sermon which had been the inspiration of the moment and not the result of painstaking preparation.

Dwight wrote a few of his discourses in his own hand. Being an extremely rapid writer, he could write, especially when he used

an abbreviated form, almost as fast as his thoughts flowed. But for the most part, his afflicted eyes made sustained work of this kind impossible. In later years he accomplished the task of writing his most important sermons by means of amanuenses. He dictated rapidly, often too rapidly for the writer. When an amanuensis wrote slowly for the sake of greater legibility, Dwight avoided loss of time by using two at once, accommodating himself to their different speeds. Thus able to dictate swiftly, his thoughts and sentences flowed with such an even smoothness that little revision was ever necessary. His style was effective largely because it was simple, lucid, and easily understood by the layman even when the subject concerned abstruse metaphysical dogma. He organized his material in logical, orderly fashion, and took care to be minutely exact in language. Having observed the incessant disputes among theologians caused by ambiguous phraseology, he studied the precise meaning of words and selected them accordingly. Lawyers, theologians, negro domestics, all could follow him. Although the power of his extemporaneous performances must now be imagined, Dwight's written discourses, dictated rapidly, display the qualities which made him one of the outstanding preachers of his day.

He appealed with equal success to the mind and the emotions, to literate and illiterate. According to one tradition, Dwight once preached at the first church in Bridgeport on what must have been a particularly appropriate topic for that congregation. He spoke so persuasively and touched so many consciences that the next day many who had heard him returned to the rightful owners axes, hoes, pitchforks, and other implements of honest husbandry borrowed, with and without leave, long before.<sup>18</sup> Eloquence capable of producing such immediate results is precious in any age.

In the midst of the general contemporary eulogy of Dwight's powers as a preacher, it is refreshing to know that there was at least one rainy Sunday when his church was not so crowded as it might have been. This was the occasion of a visit which the Reverend Ashbel Green of Philadelphia made to Dwight at Greenfield Hill. Green's journey from New York had been trying. Forced to travel after dark, he guided his horse through the blackness until his eyes became so sore that he could hardly see the road. Indeed, the going was so bad that it gave him "the horrors." Worn and



weary he eventually arrived safely at Dwight's hospitable door. The next day being the Sabbath, he preached for Dwight at both the morning and the afternoon services. Fatigued by his arduous travels, he was probably not in the most buoyant of spirits. He noted in his diary that the church was "most miserably attended, there being not more than fifty hearers in the morning, and not a great number more in the afternoon. The day was a little rainy, but not so as to confine people disposed to go out."<sup>19</sup> Perhaps they had heard that some stranger, rather than their own beloved Dwight, was to preach, and thought the change might be uninspiring.

Still, Green seems to have enjoyed his visit, for he says he had heard much of Dwight and came prepared to examine his character carefully. He found that Dwight

is, in my estimation, a man of real genius; his imagination is lively and brilliant; his perceptions are quick and strong; his taste is rather acute than delicate and distinguishing; his knowledge various and extensive; and he has great confidence in himself. He is, moreover, very benevolent, liberal and generous in his sentiments, while, at the same time, he is a strenuous stickler for what he esteems the truth. He is open, and communicative in a high degree; and to crown all, he appears to be a man of true piety, and to have the real and best interests of mankind much and constantly at heart. I like him much and whoever is capable of being influenced by benevolence and ingenuity, will not, I think, fail to like him.

This was the way Dwight first impressed Green, who, upon closer friendship during succeeding years, came to esteem and love him. At a later date, therefore, Green reported that the foibles noted at their first meeting had disappeared.<sup>20</sup> Dwight's reputation as a preacher continued unimpaired as long as he lived. Whenever he appeared in some pulpit other than his own, crowds seized the opportunity to hear him. They were not disappointed.

In addition to his two sermons each Sabbath, Dwight expounded the Scriptures to his flock in special lectures every Wednesday evening.<sup>21</sup> Ordinary laymen, in eighteenth century New England, took almost as much delight in theological as in political discussion. It was not limited to the learned. The people were well trained in doctrinal "discrimination," and men whose hands bore the marks

of heavy toil readily held their own in such debates. Thoroughly familiar with the Bible, they could quote from memory verse after verse to support their side of an argument.<sup>22</sup> Dwight said he was never thanked for any sermons so much as for these Wednesday evening lectures. His purpose was instruction. He wanted conscientiously to give his people a clear professional explanation of the Gospel truths. He did it with such skill and simplicity, clarity and force, that it proved as profitable for Dwight himself as for his people. It was in the preparation of these sermons that he worked out the system of theology which eventually made him known on both sides of the Atlantic. He afterwards delivered them in revised form at Yale, and, following his death, they were published, first in five volumes and later in many editions, in both England and America. It was one of the works upon which his fame rested. In Dwight the people of Greenfield Hill found not merely an eloquent speaker but a theologian of the first order.

The meetinghouse, which was the scene of his inspired preaching, provided a fit setting. The third building to serve the parish, it had been built some twenty years before Dwight came to Greenfield Hill. It was much admired in its day because of its "fair proportions and tall, elegant steeple." The steeple, at the east end of the building, was so high that captains guiding their ships through the waters of Long Island Sound found it a helpful landmark. Visitors who climbed the long flight of stairs were rewarded with an unrivaled view of the surrounding country—a view which, according to one enthusiast, included no fewer than seventeen churches and five lighthouses, yea, even the high promontory of East Rock on the outskirts of New Haven. The latter must have required suspiciously good eyes and clear weather, although there is reliable testimony that the steeple itself could be seen from as far away as Ridgefield.

The question of how far the bell could be heard over the neighboring fields need not be debated here. Certainly, far from being a mere ornament, it played an important part in the life of the parish. Every night at nine o'clock it sounded a curfew to let the inhabitants know the day was done. Each Sabbath morning, and likewise in the afternoon, it sent out a warning message one hour before the service was to begin, and a final summons at the ap-

pointed time. No doubt it carried the news of weddings and marked the death of friends and neighbors. Altogether, the bell ringers seem to have performed their duties with conscientious vigor, for in 1793, after only ten years of Dwight's ministry, the parish voted "to run the bell over," specifying that it was "to weigh 600 pounds after it is run." A few years later it again had to be recast. Obviously, the bell called that devout community to church with a tone not easily disregarded.<sup>23</sup>

The faithful who responded to it, entered the building through large double doors in the middle of the south side. There they found themselves opposite the pulpit, over which was suspended a large umbrellalike contrivance which served as a sounding board. The builders who thought of this refinement, never dreamed of including a chimney in their plans. In those hardy days the luxurious comfort of heat in a church smacked of a self-indulgence bordering upon sacrilege itself. On cold winter Sabbaths small foot stoves were conceded to the weaker sex, but the men had to be satisfied with overcoats, mufflers, and the pastor's vivid warnings of hell fire to counteract the chilly temperature. The day of the wood-burning stove, with a smoke pipe protruding through the sash of a window, was yet far in the future. Cushionless, straight, high-backed benches further reduced the danger of drowsiness. However, when the members of each family took their places inside the square pews and closed the door after them, they had the satisfaction of knowing they occupied that sacred spot by right of ownership purchased long ago.

The whole building was a source of general pride. Dwight probably had no difficulty, the first summer after his ordination, in stimulating the congregation to repair damages wrought by twenty years' exposure to the New England climate. A committee was appointed to see if the "ruff" was worth painting and to "vue" the whole meetinghouse. The result was a vote to raise a rate of one penny on the pound to paint "ruff," "eves," and windows. A few years later, when it became necessary to paint again, they did the whole building, "steapel" and all, paying for it shrewdly in continental currency. One other running expense was less costly. There had to be a functionary to sweep and sand the meetinghouse. In 1781 this responsibility was bestowed for one year upon Heze-



kiah Bradley, who received thirty shillings "for his trouble." Whether Hezekiah or some other performed this office during Dwight's administration, a neat meetinghouse was imperative from the pastor's and everybody's point of view.

Under Dwight, too, attention was given to music. On August 20, 1794, the parish, ever striving for better things, voted to have the singing revised and authorized a committee to hire a singing master for three months if need be. Apparently, the step succeeded, for, the following November, seven gentlemen qualified officially as "choristers to pitch Psalms." Dwight himself was a lover of religious music, writing hymns and putting them to music as enthusiastically as he sang them. Under his direction the people seem to have begun to develop that taste for music which eventually led to stringed instruments, a choir, and a melodeon. These refinements were reserved for a later generation to enjoy, although in Dwight's time the parish took pride, as it has done ever since, in the two silver communion tankards presented by liberal benefactors in the 1760's. Indeed, there was much about the old church to be cherished, and Dwight delighted in it all.<sup>24</sup>

Parish affairs in great variety occupied his attention. There were the usual clerical duties to be fulfilled, baptisms and marriages to be performed, funeral sermons to be preached. In health and sickness, joy and sorrow, he labored among his people. There were puzzling passages of Scripture to be explained, cases of conscience to be solved, meetings for prayer to be conducted, benevolent societies to be encouraged. He was probably consulted, as most clergymen were, on the educational problems of the district, the appointment of teachers, the best textbooks to be used, examinations, and similar matters.<sup>25</sup> In the Fairfield town meeting, which was sometimes held in the meetinghouse at Greenfield Hill, his voice must have been heard regularly. He was as interested in the temporal affairs of the community as in its spiritual welfare. In his mind the two were inseparable.

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Dwight did not confine his energies to the local business of his own parish. He plunged with the same enthusiasm into the affairs of the church as a whole. Of immediate interest was the district

association, an organization of the Congregational clergy in his vicinity. It met twice a year at the home of one of the ministers, and Dwight at once became an energetic member. Whether or not he was responsible for it, the minutes of its meetings were much fuller and the association apparently more active during the years of his participation than it had been before.<sup>26</sup> The meetings provided an opportunity for conversation on all problems of mutual interest.

There was usually a service, with a sermon, in the church, after which a variety of business came before the body. The association recommended ministers for vacant pulpits, and fixed the qualifications required of young theological students who wished to enter the ministry in their district. It granted licenses to preach, but only after subjecting each candidate to a thorough test. The examination covered "casuistic, polemic, and systematic divinity" as well as the applicant's knowledge of the orders and offices of the church, church government and discipline, the import of the special ordinances of the Gospel, the extent of the visible Church and the terms of communion therein.<sup>27</sup> In 1791, perhaps at Dwight's suggestion, for as a schoolmaster he was particularly concerned with such matters, it was decided to examine the candidates in classical learning (i.e. the learned languages) and church history in addition to the theology. This was done regularly thereafter, and probably Dwight often led the questioning in the "arts and sciences" phase of the examination. Youthful applicants doubtless found the grilling thorough and searching. Determined believers in an educated clergy, the Fairfield West Association guarded its standards carefully.<sup>28</sup>

The organization performed other useful functions. If difficulties developed between a pastor and his congregation, the association, acting in an advisory capacity usually through a committee, helped find a solution. They heard charges of heresy, and attempted to settle disputes of all kinds. Concerning ecclesiastical affairs in general they made recommendations to their churches, once, for example, suggesting a uniform order of service for all churches in the district. When the General Association of Connecticut, the state body, proposed problems for local discussion, they came to a decision and reported their opinion accordingly. On the serious

question whether it is an institution of the Gospel that baptized children, as soon as they are capable of eating and behaving with decency, should partake of the Lord's Supper, the Fairfield West Association voted a firm *No*, although they admitted that the Scriptures contain absolute promises of temporal and spiritual good to the children of believers. The local association retaliated by asking the General Association's advice upon questions no less troublesome. Their delegates attended the state meetings armed with definite instructions, and upon their return made a report of what had been done and said. Dwight was appointed more frequently than any other to represent them at the state gatherings, where he often presided or served on important committees, and his opinions were valued as highly as at home.<sup>29</sup>

In their own meetings, the clergy of Dwight's association plunged into metaphysical debate with the eagerness of experts. They voted enthusiastically to discuss one or more theological questions at each meeting, the questions to be formulated one meeting in advance so that the members might have time to give their best efforts to the inquiry. Thus they wrestled with the problems whether infants are fit subjects of baptism, and whether immersion is necessary to a scriptural performance of that ceremony. They decided that "miracles are a convincing proof of the truth of divine revelation"; that incontinence is the only ground for divorce according to Scripture; and they settled more than one theological doubt in the minds of the members.

They also answered the practical questions of administration. On one occasion Dwight was on a committee of three appointed to secure the advice of the Superior Court on the question of how long before marriage persons ought, according to law, to stand published when such publication was *viva voce*; the committee reported the court's opinion that marriage might be celebrated any time after such publication, no doubt a welcome decision to the principals involved. The association also arranged for "supplies" to destitute congregations in Vermont; and agreed that, upon the death of a minister, the Association would send a supply although the salary of the deceased minister was to continue to be paid to his family.<sup>30</sup> The organization provided a means of settling many



problems, practical and theological. It was intellectually stimulating, professionally helpful, and filled a need felt by all. It is certain that Dwight made many contributions to the group.

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One of the major issues which confronted them was the vogue for Deistic ideas and religious skepticism. This was a phase of post-war demoralization which greatly alarmed the clergy. Dwight, perhaps more excited than the rest, soon made a place for himself among the foremost defenders of Christianity. In zeal and resourcefulness, none surpassed him. As the campaign against "Infidelity" gathered momentum, the orthodox rejoiced in his leadership.

Dwight and his colleagues were well aware that they faced a major war, not a neighborhood skirmish. Everywhere in the world at large Revelation was being derided. Voltaire and others had set into motion currents of thought which swept swiftly over the ocean. No geographic barrier could block the spread of false doctrine. It was a struggle of ideologies. Then as the forces of Antichrist let loose by the French Revolution multiplied their victories abroad, clerical leaders in Connecticut appreciated the menace of Philosophy all the more clearly. So soon as May, 1789, the month when the Estates General opened their momentous sessions, the little group of Fairfield clergymen went into action.

With Dwight doubtless a prime mover, they instructed their delegates to urge upon the state General Association the appointment of a minister to preach each year, in the First Church at Hartford, on the afternoon of the General Election day, a sermon supporting the divine authority of Holy Scripture. They also wanted copies of these sermons, in a fair hand, to be deposited with the Associational Register so that the best might be published and distributed. Here was a definite tactical suggestion indicative of the strategy behind Dwight's methods of combating the enemy. It rested upon the conviction that atheistical philosophy could never stand against truth. Throughout the struggle this was the principle upon which Dwight acted.

But the General Association moved slowly. In October, it merely referred the proposal, with minor changes, to the various local associations throughout the state for discussion. For some

time the matter hung fire. Finally, on June 21, 1791, the General Association adopted a resolution, pushed by the Fairfield West Association, which modified the original proposition in certain respects. The preacher was to be appointed annually, not in rotation by the several associations, but from the state at large by the General Association. The sermon, on the Evidences of the Christian Religion, was to be delivered in the Brick Church at New Haven, at four o'clock on the day preceding the Yale Commencement; and a fair copy was to be left with the Register to be disposed of at the direction of the General Association. This arrangement achieved the desired purpose.

The honor of preaching the first sermon, at the next Commencement, fell to the Reverend Mr. Smalley with such encouraging results that the lecture became a regular feature of the program for some years thereafter.<sup>31</sup> In 1793, with Jonathan Edwards, Jr., as alternate, Dwight was asked to preach, and so well did he acquit himself that the sermon was promptly printed for the benefit of a still wider audience than the one which filled the Brick Meeting-House to hear him. It was his celebrated *Discourse on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament*. Dwight's mind overflowed with so many arguments buttressing his cause that he could not mention them all even in the printed version.<sup>32</sup> Since these will be surveyed at length later, suffice it here to say that if Dwight's clerical brethren did not already rate him as their strongest champion against the insidious forces of Infidelity, this sermon served to gain him that recognition.

Stimulated by the strength Dwight gave them, the General Association of Connecticut, in June, 1794, made a series of recommendations to the local associations for a more effective counter-offensive against Deists and Skeptics. "Considering the importance of Christianity to mankind, the danger to which youth are at the present time exposed, & the duty incumbent on themselves & their brethren to promote the influence of Religion among youth especially, and generally among those of all ages," they suggested:

(1) That the several associations in the state send an annual report to the General Association of the "state of their congregations, of the degree of attention to religion existing in them & of their moral situation in general."

(2) That the ministers give the young people of their congregations stated instruction in the evidences, doctrines, and duties of Christianity, and that they consider this, so far as convenient, an important branch of their ministerial labors.

(3) That meetings for prayer and religious conference be held "because of their usefulness and the happy consequences which have resulted from them."

(4) That the associations make themselves responsible for seeing that students in theology devote sufficient time to their professional education and are provided with the necessary books and "advantages" to enable them to become so well versed in the doctrines and evidences of Christianity that they would be able to defend those doctrines and the authority of the Scriptures against unbelievers, as well as to instruct others to do the same.

(5) That, since it was difficult for individuals to secure the necessary books, the Associations should establish circulating libraries, containing the most important books relating to the deistical controversy, and increase them by yearly contributions to such a size as to answer effectually the important purposes specified.

(6) That the Associations annually inform the General Association of the manner and degree in which they comply with the above recommendations, and, in cases of noncompliance, state their reasons.<sup>33</sup>

Thus did the organized churches of Connecticut carry the fight to the infidel. These particular maneuvers evidently proved effective, for the following year the associations brought in reports of what they had done, and the accounts were said to contain "many things agreeable to the wishes and recommendations of the general Association."<sup>34</sup> The war continued to be fought along these lines, with Dwight in the front line of every battle. He soon gained command of a position from which he could direct operations and win substantial victories. But more of this later.

\* \* \*

As his fight against Deism shows, Dwight thought in terms of the spiritual welfare of the whole nation, not merely parish and state. Possessing friends and acquaintances everywhere, he worked with the Presbyterians of New York and states to the south as



energetically as with his fellow Congregationalists in New England. Among the clergy of both denominations he exerted a happy influence, removing prejudices and promoting cooperation.<sup>35</sup>

Before the Revolution, Congregationalists (especially Edwardians) in Connecticut and western Massachusetts, and Presbyterians in the middle colonies had been drawing together. The New England clergy were then eager to secure united opposition to the threatened establishment of an Anglican episcopate in America. They differed from Presbyterians mainly in polity. The latter solved the problem of church government by an orderly system. The presbytery, consisting of the ministers and one lay elder from each church in a certain area, exercised local authority. Over the presbytery stood the synod, and over the synod stood the national body, the General Assembly. In Connecticut the Congregationalists had a somewhat analogous, although looser, organization. Most churches and ministers complied with the Saybrook Platform of 1708. The churches united by counties in "Consociations" while their ministers joined together in "Associations." Delegates from the local associations made up the General Association of the whole state.

The strength of the Connecticut system varied in different parts of the state. In churches where the strictly congregational feeling remained paramount, there was a tendency to regard the consociations and associations as advisory bodies only. Their recommendations were accordingly accepted or rejected at will. But where pro-Presbyterian sentiment prevailed, the consociations and associations exercised a much more powerful and binding influence, somewhat in the manner of the Presbyterian ruling councils. Near New York where the Presbyterians were strong, Fairfield County, which included Greenfield Hill, was probably the most Presbyterian-like county in Connecticut. Dwight himself leaned decidedly in that direction. When, in his *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven*,<sup>36</sup> he listed the churches to be found in that town, he made no distinction between "Congregational" and "Presbyterian" but seems regularly to have used the terms more or less interchangeably. It was easy for Dwight and his Fairfield friends to mingle with their Presbyterian brethren to the south.

Following the War for Independence several motives favored

a closer connection. Congregational leaders in Connecticut, for the most part, sided with the Federalist view in favor of a strong national government. For them Jeffersonian democracy meant mob rule, and the excesses of the French Revolution strengthened their fears. Concomitant dangers were deism and atheism. These at least were more or less open enemies, but now orthodoxy in New England faced a menace within the church itself. This was a rising "liberalism," which, vague and inchoate at first, gradually assumed the ugly form of Unitarianism. Here was a heresy whose subtle influence undermined the very foundations of the faith. Its guardians soon saw that a successful defense against the contamination required effective organization on their part.

With a Presbyterian government it would be possible to erect creeds and enforce strict adherence to them. They could supervise more efficiently the training and licensing of candidates for the ministry, and make certain that only reliable pastors were ordained over the churches. The line between orthodox and unorthodox must be drawn sharply so that friend and foe might be unmistakably identified. All this would be difficult, if not impossible, under a purely congregational organization which permitted each church to be independent. The cause was impelling. Hence it was that Dwight and his confreres looked favorably upon Presbyterianism.<sup>37</sup>

Conditions on the frontier also influenced their attitude. As more and more immigrants moved west the need for churches there became more pressing. To theologically conservative Congregationalists, Presbyterianism seemed a more effective method of protecting these infant institutions against the perils confronting them. In the newer thinly settled regions it took time for recently arrived inhabitants to become acquainted and accustomed to working together. Meanwhile, ministers of doubtful character might easily impose dangerous doctrines upon the unsuspecting. To churchmen of the older settlements in the East the evangelization of the West was a matter of supreme importance. Many believed that Presbyterian polity would prove to be the bulwark of orthodoxy.

With these things in mind, Dwight threw the weight of his influence behind the cause of close cooperation by all Calvinists.

Meeting at his house in Greenfield Hill on October 9, 1787, the Fairfield West Association appointed Dwight and one other a committee to draw a plan for promoting a general union among "the Presbyterians" throughout the United States. The following May, the committee reported its proposal for presentation to the General Association. The matter required time and discussion as well as consultation with Presbyterian leaders. They proved friendly. The Reverend Ashbel Green later recorded in his autobiography that in 1790 he proposed to the Presbyterian General Assembly that the connection with the New England churches, which had done so much good before the Revolution, be renewed. Green claims credit for bringing this about although Dwight and others seem to have had the idea earlier. No doubt the movement came not from one individual but from the combined efforts of many.

Dwight conducted an extensive correspondence on the subject with influential clergy in Connecticut and New York.<sup>38</sup> But nothing was accomplished until, at the meeting on May 25, 1790, the Fairfield West Association appointed Dwight one of two delegates to the General Association with definite instructions to push the plan. The General Association met in June at Dwight's house, and sent a formal proposal to the Presbyterian General Assembly. This resulted in a meeting of a joint committee of both bodies at New Haven in September, 1791. Principal leaders of each denomination attended. With Dwight acting as scribe, they "harmoniously and happily" agreed upon union and drafted the necessary articles. These arranged for delegates from each organization to be sent regularly to the meetings of the other, where they were to have the right to speak but not to vote. Three years later, at the request of the Presbyterians, the privilege of voting was granted. Green says the Congregationalists readily agreed to this because their General Association was only an advisory body while the acts of the General Assembly bound the whole Presbyterian Church. In due time, the associated churches of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont were also admitted.<sup>39</sup>

Since they were much more loosely organized, Connecticut remained the strongest link tying Presbyterians and New England Congregationalists together. Connecticut's system of consociations and associations and geographical proximity made the affiliation



easier. There was then no disparity between the Presbyterian General Assembly, which was a national body, and the Connecticut General Association. In fact, the latter represented larger numbers, and both felt that the alliance would be as beneficial to one as to the other. The great purpose was to strengthen the bonds and influence of virtuous men, obstruct the growth of vice and infidelity, and encourage the progress of true religion. Dwight was largely responsible for bringing the two denominations together.

The friendly relations which he helped establish led to the "Plan of Union," an agreement made in 1801 between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in order to avoid conflict in their missionary activity. Jonathan Edwards the younger, doubtless aided by his nephew Dwight, seems to have been largely responsible for initiating this Plan and getting it adopted. The problem arose from the fact that among the new settlers who were continually pouring into the West, some were Presbyterian and some were Congregational. Division seemed undesirable in the small, frontier settlements, and so the Connecticut General Association and the Presbyterian General Assembly agreed upon the Plan of Union as a *modus vivendi* to promote harmony and a more uniform system of church government among Christians in the struggling young communities on the frontier. Churches in which one denomination then definitely predominated, were to be allowed to follow their chosen polity without interference. Where a congregation was more or less evenly divided, or where the pastor belonged to one preference and the majority of the congregation favored the other, a method of administering church discipline by means of mixed committees was set up. The Plan clearly contemplated the establishment of associations as well as presbyteries, and both groups sacrificed features of their polity. It was a compromise intended to be fair to all, but in actual practice it operated eventually in favor of the Presbyterians. Friction developed, and later doctrinal controversies widened the split until the "Old School" Presbyterians finally repudiated the agreement in 1837.

In 1852 the Congregational Albany Convention, whose presiding officer was Dwight's son, the Reverend William T. Dwight, also formally repudiated the Plan, and the unity for which Dwight had once hoped collapsed completely. Nevertheless in Dwight's

own time the effort seemed worth while, and he at least did what he could to make it so.<sup>40</sup>

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Busy as he was with church affairs, Dwight somehow found time to continue his literary interests. In 1785 he published *The Conquest of Canaan*, whose ten thousand lines represented his earliest effort at poetry on a truly grand scale. He had started it with the confidence of youth at the age of nineteen, and by the time he was twenty-three he had finished it. In 1775 steps had been taken to publish it; proposals for printing it had been circulated, and over three thousand subscribers secured. But the roar of war had delayed the plan until peace brought once more the quiet essential for things sublime. Except for a few "additions" the poem now appeared as originally written. Its monumental character made an enormous impression upon his contemporaries.

But Dwight was not content to rest his literary reputation upon *The Conquest of Canaan* alone. He could also write shorter poems, some of which Mathew Carey published in his *American Museum*.<sup>41</sup> One was called simply "A Song," and another, on a more formal theme, appeared under the suggestive heading "The seasons moralized; by the rev. dr. Dwight." Elihu H. Smith thought Dwight's poem "The Trial of Faith" worthy of being set beside other examples of American poetic genius, and placed it in his collection *American Poems*.<sup>42</sup> Although blunt prose was good enough to express contempt for the unbeliever Ethan Allen,<sup>43</sup> in *The Triumph of Infidelity: a Poem*<sup>44</sup> Dwight turned to piquant verse for an adequate denunciation of all things deistic. The results were happier when he devoted his talent to composing hymns, but his fame as a poet rests primarily upon his *Greenfield Hill*, published in 1794.

Dwight also used successfully the medium of the essay in a series published, under the title of "The Friend," in the *New Haven Gazette*<sup>45</sup> and reprinted later in the *American Museum*.<sup>46</sup> These were written with the *Spectator* as a model, and display a touch, often light and humorous, not encountered in Dwight's ponderous theological treatises. His prose was usually solemn whether his subject was political or religious, although it reflects a mastery of the English language which contemporaries lauded as of the first qual-

ity.<sup>47</sup> His various efforts made Dwight loom as one of the leading lights in American literature whose works could be compared to the best European standards without fear of disparagement. It was partly this which was in the minds of the college authorities at Princeton, New Jersey, when, in 1787, they honored him with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, alumnus of Yale though he was.<sup>48</sup> In that year he was only thirty-five years of age.

\* \* \*

Life at Greenfield Hill was much to Dwight's liking. There amid pleasant surroundings and congenial friends, he and his wife made a happy home. No contemporary description of their house has come down to us, and after much remodeling the last portion of it disappeared many years ago. Doubtless it was a spacious frame dwelling in the style of the time. Dwight speaks of it, perhaps with poetic license, as a "mansion."<sup>49</sup> Shaded by two elm trees, it was only about an eighth of a mile from the church on what is now, and probably was then, the main road from Fairfield Center to Greenfield Hill. Near by were the six acres of land, granted to him as part of his "settlement," where he cultivated his garden with scientific efficiency. In *Greenfield Hill* Dwight himself gives a hint of the awesome atmosphere surrounding the place:

There, turret-crown'd, and central, stood  
A neat, and solemn house of God.  
Across the way, beneath the shade,  
Two elms with sober silence spread,  
The Preacher liv'd. O'er all the place  
His mansion cast a Sunday grace;  
Dumb stillness sate the fields around;  
His garden seem'd a hallow'd ground;  
Swains ceas'd to laugh aloud, when near,  
And school-boys never sported there.<sup>50</sup>

One who saw it in 1789 noted in his diary that Dwight's residence commanded "a beautiful and extensive view of Long Island." Inside, he found the rooms "ornamented with paintings from the pencil of Mr. Dunlap," who, upon returning from his studies under West in London, had married Mrs. Dwight's half-sister earlier that same year. Some of these sketches were inspired by scenes and sub-

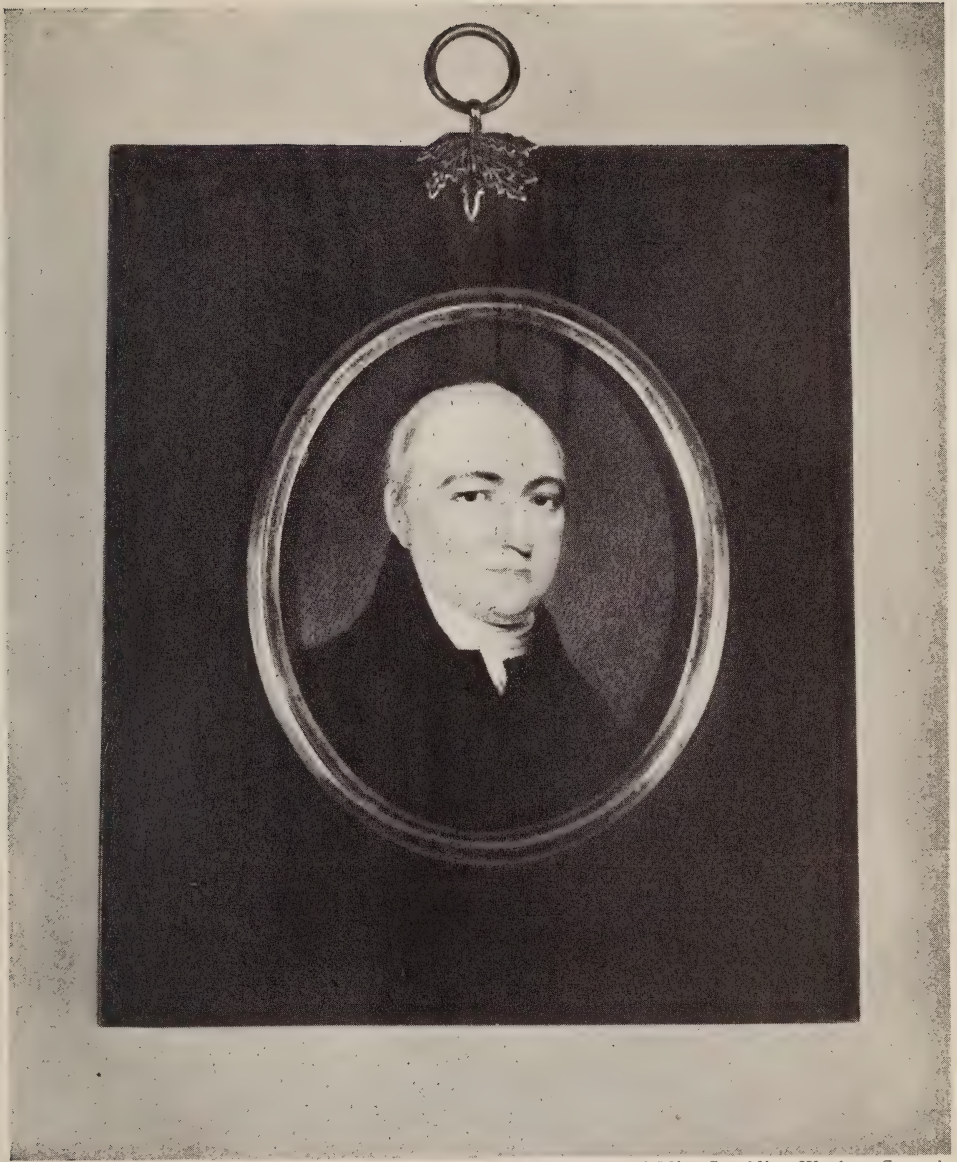


jects in Dwight's poem *The Conquest of Canaan*. One, from the Third Book, lines 135-136, represented Irad and Selima as

O'er northern plains serene the lovers stray,  
And various converse charms their easy way.

In the visitor's judgment the figure of Irad was "well delineated" but that of Selima unfortunately was "not so well" done. He also saw portraits of Dr. and Mrs. Dwight; but whether these too were from the pencil of William Dunlap he does not make clear. Ralph Earle had painted portraits of both Mr. and Mrs. Dwight in the year of their marriage (1777), and it is likely that these were in their house at Greenfield. A portrait of Dwight signed "WD" (William Dunlap?), now in the possession of a descendant, might well have been hanging there too, for Dunlap, who was on intimate terms with his brother- and sister-in-law, must have painted portraits of both. In any case, the diarist who visited the Dwight house at this time needed no portrait to convince him that Dwight's "presence is commanding," although "a habit of winking denotes a weakness of the eyes." He thought it worth recording, too, that Dr. and Mrs. Dwight "treated us very civilly."<sup>51</sup> He was but one of many who were received cordially at their hospitable door.

Near at hand was Dwight's flourishing garden. It provided his family with plenty of fresh vegetables and gave him the exercise he valued so highly. Having once experienced the disastrous effects of too sedentary a life, Dwight ever afterwards guarded his health with extreme care. He walked, and rode horseback regularly, but found steady and vigorous work in his garden equally effective and pleasant. Long familiar with the problems of farming, he took a keen interest in scientific agriculture. He went to any trouble to procure the seeds of rare plants and the finest varieties. He experimented continually, trying new methods of his own and comparing the results with traditional theories and practices. He studied fertilizers to discover the best kinds for different types of soil, and the proper ways of using them for best results with certain crops. One manure, readily at hand, was the "white-fish, a kind of herring, remarkably fat, and too bony to be eaten" conveniently. These helpful fish made themselves available by arriving at the shores in large shoals during the early summer. Caught with seines "in im-



*Courtesy of Miss Geraldine Woolsey Carmalt.*

Timothy Dwight, a miniature by William Dunlap.





mense multitudes," ten to twelve thousand dressed an acre richly. Dwight found them suited to most soils and almost every kind of vegetation in garden or field. Except for the aroma, which was far from delicate, he praised their virtues highly.<sup>52</sup>

With characteristic thoroughness he attacked all the other problems—the extermination of weeds and Hessian flies, the relative merits of oxen versus horses, fences versus hedges, and what tools were best for each purpose. For seven years the rose bug, then considered one of the most destructive of all insects, ravaged the parish, eating the best flavored fruits. By plowing them under in late November for three successive years, Dwight freed his land of the pests.

When some mysterious blight had destroyed his watermelon vines at Northampton, he had failed to find the cause. Now at Greenfield, he discovered it to be a "louse" of a faded greenish brown color which killed the plant by feeding upon the root. Dwight noticed that when he pulled up a plant the earth usually brushed off the louse. This, he concluded, was the reason most people failed to diagnose the source of the trouble and in their discouragement decided it was useless to try to cultivate watermelons. He, on the other hand, saved his by frequently drenching the ground nearest the roots with a strong "decoction of Burdock leaves and elder twigs." To do this he made eight or ten holes, six inches deep, around each plant, using a stick three-fourths of an inch in diameter. Soaking the roots in this way proved effective in a dry season; but when the weather was wet it was too laborious, even for one of Dwight's determination, because it had to be repeated after every shower. The louse disliked the taste of Dwight's decoction, but as soon as the rain diluted the liquid or washed it away the pest returned to the feast.

Dwight gained more satisfaction and distinction by being one of the first in this country to cultivate strawberries. The custom was to depend upon the wild variety, but Dwight convinced himself that this was foolish. After experimenting for eight years, he discovered that the field strawberry, which was ten days earlier than the meadow strawberry and sweeter, did not increase in size whereas the meadow variety doubled its dimensions after cultivation. He concluded that the large meadow strawberry was best

adapted to this country, and advised setting them out in longitudinal rows the third week in April. It is also interesting to know that the Reverend Dr. Dwight found a satisfactory recipe for making cider, which he recorded with his usual attention to detail. He preserved apples in dry sand or in airtight casks but warned that, for the best results with casks, they should be emptied once during the winter, defective apples discarded and the sound ones wiped dry.<sup>53</sup> Dwight's interest in husbandry was intensely practical and progressive. He was as expert in it as in theology.

One of his closest friends said of him: "I think I never knew a man who took so deep an interest in every thing,—the best mode of cultivating a cabbage, as well as the phenomena of the heavens or the employment of angels."<sup>54</sup> His inquisitive mind ranged the whole field of truth, so far as human faculties could embrace it. He regarded nothing as insignificant that pertained to the works of God or to the obligations and interests of man. He was as much at home with farmers as with philosophers. Once when he visited a relative in an obscure village far in the interior of New England, his arrival stirred the whole hamlet. Friends and neighbors were invited to pass the evening with the distinguished guest. Since most of them made their living from a stubborn soil, Dwight directed the conversation mainly to agricultural topics. He showed himself as competent as they. The ladies were disappointed that he spent so much of the evening discussing potatoes and sheep with their husbands, but Dwight knew his audience. He was always willing and able to fit into any company. The variety of his own interests, his knowledge and enthusiasm, and his natural gift for conversation enabled him to talk well on almost any subject. He was socially an asset everywhere.<sup>55</sup>

Greenfield Hill itself was a rural parish but far from a dull one. Not a dead end, it was easy of access. The Boston and New York post road ran through Fairfield, only four miles away, and traffic flowing along that thoroughfare was heavy according to the standard of the day. When, one day, the eastern and western stages arrived with only a single passenger in each, the circumstance caused surprise as "somewhat singular, on this great road." At all seasons of the year, travelers, riding horses and driving carriages, as well as in crowded coaches, made their way through the dust and

mud. They brought reports and opinions from all parts of the country. With the postmaster the "centre of intelligence," news came with what seemed remarkable speed. *The Boston Centinel* reached readers in Fairfield, two hundred miles away, the third day after publication. Mail from New York arrived even sooner.

It was not a difficult trip to the latter city, and Dwight visited it frequently, on business of his own and the church, or to see friends and relatives. Members of his wife's family lived there, and at the studio of his brother-in-law, William Dunlap, he saw the works of that talented painter-dramatist. The paintings ranged in subject from the "Inauguration of the President," on a scale twelve by eight feet, to the "Choice of Hercules" and "Youth Rescued from a Shark." Over the teacups Dwight and Dunlap discussed poetry, criticized each other's writings, and probably disagreed, with gentlemanly firmness, on the theater.<sup>56</sup> Contact with a man of the world and the arts like Dunlap could have done the Reverend Dr. Dwight no harm, although it never changed his Calvinistic attitude toward such a thing of the flesh and devil as the theater.

The less poisonous amusements of Greenfield Hill were more to his liking. An alumnus of Dwight's Academy, looking back upon his school days in the village, remembered that "those were lively times in Greenfield." Usually filled to overflowing, the tavern back of the church was a center of activity. Many prominent visitors stopped there, attracted by the beauty of the spot and by Dr. Dwight's fame. Among them were lawyers and judges, men of first importance in the state and federal governments, foreign ambassadors, yea, Talleyrand himself fresh from the turmoil of Revolutionary France. The stream of notables became so commonplace that even the small boys of the town grew reconciled to their presence. Once a month in the winter the tavern was the scene of a dance. The reliable Moses Sturges did the fiddling, and there was wine and plum cake, enough for everybody. Dr. Dwight, with all his dignity, would drop in long enough to take a glass of wine and a piece of cake, and tell some pleasant stories. He always departed within an hour. Wine and plum cake were all very well, but for himself he had no time for too much frivolity.<sup>57</sup>

His were the "pure pleasures of parochial life." Dwight rejoiced in the life of a country clergyman because it was free from base



ambition, "broils," and "vain and bustling pomp." Unlike the politician, "guilted prospects" did not lure the clergyman into "legislative pride, or chair of state." Unlike those who thirst for "the grandeur of superfluous wealth," he was not besieged by swarms of soothing flatterers humming around his board. Comparatively free from temptations, the country clergyman could grow in virtue. His lot, said Dwight, forbade him to become the tool of fraud and injustice, and spared him the agonizing cares and griefs which avarice and ambition inevitably produce. He had more time to spend with his wife and children—the "sweetest communion which nature can give." He could devote more attention to the tasks of love and duty, particularly to the children, opening their minds to "truth's pure delight."

To take them by the hand, and lead them on,  
In that straight, narrow road, where virtue walks;  
To guard them from a vain, deceiving world;  
And point their course to realms of promis'd life.

Although, argued Dwight, a clergyman sometimes had to face attack and ridicule, he usually enjoyed the esteem of those about him. His flock attested their affection for him in countless ways, and gave him a friendly welcome wherever he walked.

All virtue's friends are his: the good, the just,  
The pious, to his house their visits pay.

And he was in a peculiarly favorable position to reap the joys of the Sabbath when

In neat attire, the village households come,  
And learn the path-way to the eternal home.

There were also the pleasant associations with one's fellow clergy. Formally in official gatherings and informally in private, they conversed about the saints and prophets; about truth and virtue in a world of sin; about "learning's varied realm," nature's works, and the Bible, "that bless'd book which gilds man's darksome way with light from heaven"; about the Messiah's throne and kingdom, prophecies fulfilled and prophecies more glorious still to come.

Many, indeed, were the delights of labor in their common cause and friendships "sublim'd by piety and love."

Dwight felt that the very nature of a clergyman's work gave him reason to be gratified with his lot. His blessed task was to bid contention cease; to lead mankind back from guilt and the brink of woe to virtue's house; to inspire faith, hope, and joy; to warm the soul with love to God and man; to cheer the sad, to "fix" the doubting, rouse the languid, and restore the wandering; to spread with down the thorny bed of death, console the poor departing mind and aid "its lingering wing." Such tasks and scenes unfolded the "choicest pages of Truth," which, Dwight maintained, philosophy could never do. Philosophy merely left the mind as it found it, perhaps more "informed" but not more wise. Dwight insisted that a clergyman witnessed things which made him a wiser, nobler, better man. His life, studies, and profession provided him with every good. He experienced joys which neither pride nor wealth could give; he escaped a world unclean and led a life of truth and usefulness. Serving a Prince who allows no sincere and humble toil to miss a rich reward, he might expect to rise triumphant beyond the grave, and, outshining the stars in the sky, reign eternally with the saints and angels.

So slides the year, in smooth enjoyment, round.  
Thrice bless'd the life, in this glad region spent,  
In peace, in competence, and still content;  
Where bright, and brighter, all things daily smile,  
And rare and scanty, flow the streams of ill.<sup>58</sup>

## CHAPTER VI

### Dwight's Academy

PLEASANT THOUGH Dwight found the life at Greenfield Hill, problems of family finance pursued him even there. True, the parish gave him the post on extraordinarily munificent terms and lived up to its part of the contract as "cheerfully" and punctually as could be expected—perhaps more so, they said. They paid the three annual installments of his one-thousand-dollar settlement promptly. Each year they provided him with the twenty cords of good firewood they had promised him, regularly appointing a committee to inspect the wood to see that every load was a full half-cord. They gave him nut wood as well as "oke." But in regard to his princely annual salary of five hundred dollars, conditions were less ideal. It was usually in arrears, commonly by a whole year and sometimes even two. Eventually it always came, but meanwhile he had to provide for his wife and children by methods of his own devising. It was merely one of the inexorable hazards of the clerical profession, most members of which learned patience by the same discipline. Yet, the joy of anticipating the uncertain moment when he would receive two years' back pay, could scarcely have compensated for the inconvenience of having to allow for the delay. On the other hand, Dwight's chief difficulty came from a circumstance to which it was far less easy to accommodate himself.<sup>1</sup>

Liberal as it was, five hundred dollars was simply not enough to cope with the demands of hospitality, a growing family, and the expenses incident to his position. Time soon made this even clearer than it was at the beginning. Dwight's list of friends and callers steadily lengthened as his expanding reputation brought more people to his door. In addition to fellow clergy, men prominent in literature, law, and politics continually sought him out. He received



them all, strangers and intimates alike, with the same generous cordiality, and his house was always filled with company. His family also grew steadily larger. When he came to Greenfield Hill he had only two sons to feed and clothe, but before he left four more were added to the group around his table. For some time the depreciated currency continued to snarl domestic budgets into even more puzzling tangles than under normal conditions. Dwight was naturally a thrifty manager with no interest in lavish display. But five hundred dollars, paid a year or two late, tested his resourcefulness severely. He had to find additional income.

He decided that the most feasible and congenial method was to continue the school he had conducted so successfully at Northampton. That venture had already made him widely known as one of the foremost schoolmasters in New England, and created a demand for his services. Teaching, too, next to the ministry itself, was the work he most enjoyed. It is, therefore, not surprising to find the following announcement in a Connecticut newspaper only a few weeks after his ordination: <sup>2</sup>

Several Gentlemen having applied to the subscriber to provide instruction for their children, in various branches of knowledge; they and others are informed that so soon as Twenty Scholars shall apply, a School shall commence at Greenfield, where the languages, Geography, English grammar, reading, writing, speaking, & the practical Branches of Mathematics will be taught, under the direction of

TIMOTHY DWIGHT

Greenfield, Dec. 20, 1783.

The response to this advertisement was apparently gratifying, for Dwight seems to have had no difficulty in assembling the necessary minimum.

No awe-inspiring architectural grandeur bewildered those twenty or more youthful "Scholars" as they entered the halls of Dwight's academy at Greenfield Hill. He held the first recitations in the large southeast room of Gershom Hubbell's house, a colonial homestead which, with simple dignity, still graces the landscape not far from the village green.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Hubbell, a worker in leather, had used the room for his shop, and probably the aroma of hides,

harness, gloves, and breeches was strong there when Dwight started his pupils along the way to knowledge. But after two years they moved into a new building designed for their own purposes, where the atmosphere, smacking less of manual labor and leather, was more suited to serious intellectual effort. In that short period the school had gained such a name for superiority and so many students were applying for admission that larger accommodations became imperative. Dwight's friends took up a subscription and, in the early summer of 1786, helped him erect an appropriate building on the Green. A small boy who was soon to struggle with the "practical Branches of Mathematics" there, looked through the trees and, perhaps with some misgiving, watched the rafters being hoisted into place. Over eighty years later he still remembered the excitement which that sight had stirred in his childish heart, for, in the quiet village of Greenfield Hill, the building of Dwight's academy long remained a memorable occasion.<sup>4</sup>

It was a simple, unpretentious structure, thirty-four feet long by twenty-two feet wide, and only one story high. The roof sloped upward on all four sides to a cupola which was surmounted by an iron weather vane. Being sturdy and safe from prying hands, the vane survived the ravages of time and generations of schoolboys, and in Greenfield today it is the treasured memento of an earlier day. The cupola was probably intended to contain a bell, but apparently never attained one. The big bell in the church tower near by was readily available although Dwight may have used some less formidable method of summoning his pupils from play to work. They entered the building through a door on the west which opened into a vestibule and thence into the main schoolroom.

This was the only room. Lighted by three windows on each of the two sides, it depended for warmth in winter upon two big stone fireplaces, one at each end. Later generations, scornful of the primitive ways of their ancestors, blocked up the fireplaces and reveled in the luxury of heat from a rectangular iron box stove under which the ink bottles could be placed at the close of the day to prevent them from freezing during the night. In Dwight's time civilization had not progressed so far, and when the snowdrifts were high and temperatures low, only the two crackling fires, with

their flames roaring up the huge chimneys, kept out the cold and thawed the ink.

There was little else to provide physical comfort or to ease the difficult process of learning. During half a century after Dwight's departure from Greenfield Hill the building continued to be used for a school, but, except for the box stove, there seems to have been little improvement in what was probably its original equipment. A board fastened edgewise to the north wall, and running the full length of the room, served as a desk. Under it a smaller shelf held books and slates. In front of these was a log "slab," smooth on the upper side but underneath still covered with bark in its natural, rounded, unfinished state. This was the seat—hard and strictly utilitarian. It had no back, and when one's turn came to recite the rules of grammar or name the capitals of Europe, it was necessary to swing the feet over the slab to face the master. Lazy youths seized this opportunity to relax by leaning against the edge of the desk, a welcome change of position. The danger of splinters increased the hazards of the turning movement, and doubtless it provided an often irresistible temptation to nudge a neighbor. The same arrangement prevailed on the opposite side of the room. But at the east end on each side of the fireplace a chosen few occupied coveted places where they could lean against the wall with the desk in front of them. Teacher ruled from a desk at the west end but probably found it necessary to rove occasionally among his charges. Students of a later day had the pleasure of fishing between the cracks in the floor boards for slate pencils which had fallen through, for there was no cellar. But while Dwight presided there, the boards were tight, and all was new and neat. Physically it was all that an academy was supposed to be in the 1780's; intellectually it was even more.<sup>5</sup>

Before the new building was finished, a correspondent in the *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine* pointed out the many factors in its favor. He wrote that Mr. Dwight's academy at Greenfield "promises to be one of the best of its kind in America." Scholars were flocking there in "great numbers." He described the new building as "a large house," located in a "handsome village on one of the most delightful situations in the country, commanding a



very extensive prospect." Besides being in a "remarkably healthy" spot, the school was surrounded by the beauties of nature and a neighborhood of "respectable families." It stood only a few yards from the church itself. Here, obviously, the children had the advantage not only of the best education but also of freedom from those "bad examples, which are often dangerous to schools in or near populous cities." For all this, the reporter announced, the expense of "boarding and education in every branch of literature" did not exceed thirty pounds currency per year.<sup>6</sup> What arguments could have been more persuasive? Anxious parents were happy to give their children the advantages of Dwight's academy.

If board and "education" did not exceed thirty pounds currency, Dwight could hardly have been profiteering. At its height the school numbered fifty or sixty pupils. Although most of the students came from out of town, only about a dozen boarded in Dwight's own house. The others lived with families in the village who profited accordingly. In one extant bill Dwight charged the modest sum of four pounds, three shillings, tenpence, for "schooling" a boy for fifty weeks and two days, vacations deducted, in 1788-1789.<sup>7</sup> This must have been for tuition only, not board, and whether it was currency or sterling is not stated. In either case, it was not an exorbitant valuation of his services.

When the guardian of one of his students pompously informed Dwight that a certain tuition bill, together with every other "reasonable" charge, would be paid punctually, Dwight replied by expressing the hope that the gentleman did not imagine he would ever make any unreasonable charges.<sup>8</sup> This is the only hint of complaint in the meager remains of Dwight's correspondence from that era. Other circumstances made this case exceptional. The boy concerned was an incorrigibly irresponsible specimen who remained stubbornly immune even to Dwight's efforts. Perhaps the guardian's thrifty Yankee instincts made him rebel at parting with good money for what admittedly had been in vain. Since Dwight was a teacher of rare ability, it is comforting to know that he did not always transform every student into an intellectual genius. For the most part, the money spent to pay his bills was well invested.

How much added income it gave him is unknown; but certainly it did not make him wealthy. Describing conditions a few years

later, Dwight wrote that a young man who kept a parochial school in Connecticut "frequently" received twenty dollars a month in addition to board, lodging, and laundry, which Dwight estimated to be the equivalent of three hundred and forty dollars a year. This he considered a "decent" reward, although the master of the grammar school at Northampton received from four to five hundred dollars.<sup>9</sup> If this indicates the average amount paid to elementary school teachers, Dwight, at the head of his own more advanced, highly regarded academy, must have earned no less and probably more. If he doubled his ministerial salary, he doubtless did well. With no endowment and no large bequests from philanthropic alumni, the school depended entirely upon student fees. Since this permitted him to employ no assistants, Dwight did all the teaching. It was a one-man institution maintained solely by his own exertions and reputation. It flourished longer and more brilliantly than its competitors.<sup>10</sup> With his salary from the church, the income from his school, perquisites in the form of gifts and courtesies from his parishioners, and his own well cared for vegetable garden, Dwight managed his finances in the amazingly efficient way characteristic of industrious New Englanders.

The school was a financial success not so much because Dwight was a skillful manager as because of the quality of his teaching and the high standards he maintained. Students came to him from the middle and southern states as well as from New England. Joel R. Poinsett of Charleston, South Carolina, who later had a notable career in American politics and diplomacy, spent two years under Dwight. He was one of several from Virginia and the Carolinas who came north to study at Greenfield Hill. The prominent Livingston family of New York entrusted their sons to Dwight's tutelage, while the Burr family from Fairfield sent three charming daughters. Dwight's rolls included boys from such remote spots as Jamaica in the West Indies and even one "DuBois" from France.<sup>11</sup> They came from the first families far and near, for Dwight's academy gained a national reputation as one of the best of its kind.

It was more than a preparatory school. He carried many of his pupils through the regular college course as effectively as though they had gone through Yale itself. Indeed, students from that institution shifted to Greenfield in order to be under his instruction,

and, inspired by the competitive spirit, he did his best to make them superior in scholarship to those who remained in New Haven. Many of his pupils, some of whom became distinguished men, obtained their only formal education from Dwight, satisfied that no college could have given them anything better. Candidates for the ministry considered it a privilege to pursue their professional theological studies under his guidance. On the other hand those young men who came to him only for their preparatory work, arrived at college so well trained that their tutors must have given thanks for the existence of Dwight's academy.<sup>12</sup>

Dwight provided a rich curriculum which, in addition to the customary elementary subjects, included a remarkable diversity of more advanced studies. There were reading, penmanship, composition, spelling, English grammar, and arithmetic. But there were also algebra, spherics, calculus, Newton's *Principia*, "*Arma virumque cano*" and the Greek Testament, natural philosophy, declamation and belles lettres, geography, and history. Nay more, for one young man who thoughtlessly married before acquiring skill in surveying and navigation, went to Dwight to make up the deficiency and kept at it for a year. The range of Dwight's own intellectual interests was so broad that he had no difficulty matching the best that contemporary colleges then had to offer.

No one objected because the pastor spent six hours each day teaching such a school. Having no assistant, Dwight made it the duty of competent older scholars to hear the recitations of the younger pupils. Under his supervision they were quite qualified to show the smaller children how to do their sums, and aid in the elementary subjects. With fifty or sixty pupils of varying ages to handle, this seems a justifiable method. Dwight used it successfully several years before Joseph Lancaster made a similar technique celebrated in England. Altogether, during his twelve years at Greenfield Hill, Dwight contrived to teach more than one thousand students.<sup>13</sup>

The few fortunate enough to board in his home felt his influence most strongly. There were usually a dozen or more of these who swelled the ordinary number of his "family" to twenty or twenty-five. They soon learned to value it as a rare privilege to be in intimate daily contact with such a man, at his table and fireside as well



as in the classroom. To know him as his own children knew him was an experience not soon forgotten.

In 1795, following Dwight's election as President of Yale, Jeremiah Day came to take charge of the school. He lived with the Dwights for a short period before they moved to New Haven, and reported:

I came here on Tuesday of this week. At present I reside at Dr. Dwight's. I am exceedingly well pleased with the Dr. and his family. He converses with every one he meets as familiarly as though they were his equals. But I never had a meaner opinion of myself than since I have had the opportunity of his company and conversation. If you wish to be put into a mould, made over, and reduced to a little insignificant nothing, I advise you to come and live with Dr. Dwight.

Being fresh from Yale, Day was worried over the prospect of his success at Greenfield because other academies had recently been established near by, and he feared the competition might be too much for his youth and inexperience. Nor was it easy to follow a predecessor like Dwight. But he wrote that, no matter how it turned out, "I imagine I shall never be sorry that I came here. The improvement I derive from Dr. Dwight I believe will be sufficient to make up for other deficiencies."<sup>14</sup>

Although Dwight ran his school because of financial necessity, he loved the work and always considered teaching one of the most useful ways of spending one's life. No doubt it gave him extreme pleasure to write a letter like the following:

Your son is disposed to study the languages, & enter college. I think I cannot discharge my duty to you or him, but by informing you that his desire entirely coincides with my opinion. He has been so studious, improved so much, & behaved so well here, that I think an education would be happily placed on him. I am, Sir, with all due respect, your very obed't

Friend & Servt.,

TIMOTHY DWIGHT<sup>15</sup>

Things did not always go in such a gratifying way. There was the case of Daniel Goodwin—it was Daniel's guardian, Captain Ebenezer Barnard, who had intimated that Dwight's charges might be out of proportion. Certainly in this instance the overburdened schoolmaster must have earned his fee. Dwight reported in a letter

to the Captain that the young man had played "a foolish & unwarrantable part" with his money in Greenfield, because the guardian had given no one a "commission to look into his pecuniary transactions." However, as soon as Dwight learned of the boy's extravagance, he warned him of the "extreme folly & danger" of it, forbidding him to continue it any further. The youth studied only "tolerably well," which made his progress strictly limited. In arithmetic he seemed to be "pretty well versed, for so heedless a boy." In penmanship he had "quitted a very bad & in a good degree gained a good habit of writing"; but he still read poorly and was "too easy & self-satisfied soon to read better." All this, of course, must have been disappointing to Captain Ebenezer; but Dwight assured that gentleman that he himself had "earnestly wished & laboured to amend" the boy, and added, "if he is not as much improved as you expect to find him, it is not the fault of his last instructor." Probably others had tried and failed too. As a consistent final touch to his record at Greenfield, the irreclaimable Goodwin, who was to have carried this letter home with him, departed without it—another "instance of negligence of a piece with his general conduct" although at school he behaved "better than in any other place."<sup>16</sup> Such are the eternal trials and tribulations of keeping school. If in this one case Dwight had to admit defeat, usually he succeeded when other teachers had been routed.

His was not the technique then sanctified by long usage. For generations orthodox pedagogy had achieved law and order in the schoolroom by brutal, strong-arm methods. Severe corporal punishment was generally approved as an inevitable necessity. Although Beccaria's enlightened pleas were beginning to be heard by penal reformers, no one dreamed of challenging the old axiom, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Instead of testing its truth, disciplinarians devoted their genius to devising original ways of carrying it into effect. One acquired local fame for a peculiarly efficient ferule of his own design—a sheet of lead encased in two pieces of sole leather. On one side he cut four holes and on the other five. These left excellent blisters on the aching palms of cringing victims who, when asked ironically whether they preferred four holes or five, knew that they were about to receive both. Another schoolmaster, equally resourceful and lenient, compelled pupils who in-

curred his displeasure to stand for long periods at a time close to the fire, in a stooping posture, with one finger on a nail in the floor. Thus the young sinner learned the error of his ways by roasting while the dull pain in his head and the dizziness which gradually came over him taught him remorse. Talkative children stopped whispering when their jaws were set apart at a painful distance by means of a chip of wood inserted between their teeth. Less heinous crimes called for softer penalties, but those offenders were fortunate who escaped with a mere boxing of the ears, a tweaking of the nose, or a pulling of the hair. Innocent and guilty suffered alike.

Such treatment stimulated healthy boys to reply in kind if there seemed to be a possibility of success. The Reverend Azel Backus, having taken charge of a friend's school for a few days, found it necessary to chastise an unruly miscreant. But as soon as he attempted to administer punishment, he found the whole school suddenly in motion against him. Since Backus was new and as yet untried, they were putting him to the test. As his assailants rushed to the fray, he took a strategic position in one corner of the room where he stood his ground. The battle opened furiously, but Dr. Backus met the onslaught and counterattacked so aggressively that the enemy, chagrined at this unexpected ministerial pugnacity, soon acknowledged defeat. Some such conquest of muscle usually had to precede that of the mind and was generally regarded as more important.

One young graduate of Yale solved the problem in a way which would be startling today. As he was about to inflict a thrashing upon a wayward pupil, his victim managed to elude the pedagogical grip and fled from the building. Realizing the importance of precedent, the zealous disciplinarian at once pursued his prey at a full run until the chase ended in the culprit's own yard. There the schoolmaster administered the chastisement, doubtless no more gently than he would have done in the schoolroom. He had no qualms about punishing the offender on his father's own ground because children who returned from school with swollen hands and backs could expect little sympathy at home when parents used the same methods. Regardless of intellectual qualifications, a school-teacher had to be strong of muscle and will, and Irishmen dropped



into the profession as naturally as into the police force at a later day.

Some academies, like the colleges for which they were preparatory, used the milder expedient of imposing fines for infractions of the laws. At Deerfield, for example, playing backgammon, checkers, or cards was as serious as absence from meeting on Sundays, and each offense brought a fine of one dollar, if one were caught. Missing daily prayers at five o'clock in the morning cost four cents while tardiness brought a penalty of two cents. This seems a cheap price for a little extra sleep, but the authorities probably charged merely what the traffic would bear. Since books were scarce, the library valued them accordingly. Damage assumed various forms, and there was a fine for each: six cents for a blot; the same for each drop of tallow; six cents per inch for every torn leaf; and two cents for each mark or scratch. Six cents also had to be forfeited for being out of rooms during study hours, or for playing ball dangerously near the academy windows. There were fines for everything.

All these time-honored methods Dwight discarded. He believed that persuasion could accomplish better results than coercion; that fines were more a penalty upon the parent than upon the pupil. Experience led him to the conclusion that the rod was effective only with children in their earliest years and failed to accomplish its purpose when they were older. In any case, he said one should always try every other method before resorting to it. He preferred "earnest and affectionate reproof," confinement, or "neglect," and found seats of disgrace especially successful. He thought it a mistake to rely upon only one kind of punishment, and his students never knew exactly what to expect. Most important of all, he made it his guiding principle to

Convince, ere you correct, and prove  
You punish, not from rage, but love;  
And teach them, with persuasion mild,  
You hate the fault, but love the child.<sup>17</sup>

This was the basis of his discipline. When a child slipped into some error of conduct, Dwight took him aside and in kindly manner discussed it with him, explaining clearly and persuasively why such behavior was wrong. This he found it best to do in private.

Public rebuke, he decided, aroused in the child too keen a sense of disgrace, and injured his pride too deeply. It had the effect of driving him to conceal his guilt by "arts," equivocation, and lies; and made him so resentful that, brooding sullenly, he tended to seek revenge either by combining with his fellows against the instructor or by committing the sin again. This, of course, did harm, not good, and defeated the purpose of discipline. On the other hand, when a youth faced a respected, fatherly adviser in private, he found himself at war only with his own conscience. Once convinced of his error, he would more willingly admit his guilt and turn from sin, grateful for the guidance of one who, he knew, acted from genuine affection. Dwight said that the severity of public reproof should be used only in extreme instances when a "gross, open and impudent crime" had been committed.

He urged discretion always. When some mischievous urchin irritated one's patience beyond the point of self-control, he suggested that it was well to wait a day before imposing sentence because

When passion rules, 'tis fear obeys;  
But duty serves, when reason sways.

In harmony with the eighteenth century emphasis upon the value of reason, Dwight sought to correct rather than to punish, to convince rather than dictate. For intimidation and flogging he substituted sympathetic understanding and persuasion. In disciplining wild young colts, he tried to inform the mind, move the conscience, and blame "with tenderness and love." Though his methods showed a startling lack of reverence for the sacred lash of traditional school-room tyranny, his students responded with gratifying results.

Dwight's large physique, his dignity and commanding presence, made him an impressive figure in any company. To youthful eyes arranged in scholarly formation before him, he presented an awe-inspiring majesty. But he had the happy faculty of being able to attach youth to him "so that while the most timid approached him with confidence, the boldest were awed into profound respect."<sup>18</sup> While he ruled with a firm hand and his pupils soon learned the wisdom of quick obedience, he daily gave them proof that in him they had a friend upon whom they could rely. He took as real an interest in them as in his own children. When they flocked around

to tell of their "lambkin sports," he never laughed at their childish foolishness but entered into their joys and sorrows with a seriousness equal to theirs. Thus making their interests his own no matter how trifling they might seem to adult eyes, he won their affection so that with him they were willing to confide "each secret purpose of the heart," safe in the certainty that he would neither treat such confidence flippantly nor betray it. He made it a cardinal point to administer rules without favoritism, to praise and blame the same things uniformly, commending each child's "worthy acts" as faithfully as he contended against his faults. Dwight said it was fatal for a teacher ever to show that he despaired of a child's talents or disposition because, "if you do, he will despair of himself, and you will ruin him."<sup>19</sup> Without benefit of twentieth century child psychology, with none of the modern scientific gauges of intelligence and aptitude, Dwight nevertheless managed to win from his students the same affectionate respect and willing obedience that his own sons gave him. Contemporaries universally hailed him as a teacher unsurpassed in his generation. But fellow educators might well marvel at how he did it—the man used neither fines nor flogging!

Some pedagogical problems did bother Dwight—spelling bees, for example. Were they proper? Was it wise thus to stimulate a spirit of competition among the young? Were contests, prizes, and the like legitimate methods of getting work out of ten-year-olds? Did rivalry of this kind really encourage school children to be more obedient or more industrious? Such tricks of the trade had the sanction of long and general usage, but Dwight felt that this did not relieve him of the obligation of examining the problem for himself. Besides he saw dangers and perplexities in these practices.

He reasoned logically. According to "the perfect rule" of Scripture, which guided him in all matters, it was every man's duty to act only from the best motives. The vitally important thing, therefore, was to train the young to obey good principles only, and to induce them to indulge in those pursuits which would make them happy and useful. This was not easy to accomplish because small children are not readily made to understand the importance of their studies. Their minds, Dwight noticed, were fitted to receive certain kinds of knowledge but not others; they could be taught facts



easily enough, but it was hard to make them comprehend principles and doctrines; and it was easier to influence them through emotion than through reasoning. Since both young and old are indolent by nature, especially in what relates to the mind, an instructor's first objective, Dwight agreed, should be to overcome this unfortunate tendency. In school the common method was to display to the slothful an industrious companion as a model to be followed. The spelling bee offered one opportunity. To most children spelling was a dull business, and the injection of a lively element of competition made it interesting.

But to a moralist of Dwight's caliber this presented a nice dilemma. On the one hand was the argument that, since children must be taught to spell, it is better to accomplish the end by means of "emulation" than not at all. The rebuttal to this was that emulation is a mixture of ambition and pride—both evil passions which ought not to be encouraged; and therefore it involved the possibility of doing the children harm while trying to do them good, which was a risk too great to be hazarded. However, Dwight argued that the mere bestowal of praise involved a similar danger. When a pupil did well Dwight felt it necessary to tell him so, because otherwise he would not know whether he had given a good or bad recitation. Unless the teacher informed him, he might think he had done poorly and be discouraged from further effort. Dwight observed that often when a desponding youth was told that he had done well, or was capable of doing well, it encouraged him greatly. Even adults found it stimulating to be thought successful in an undertaking. Yet here was the rub. Although an instructor should have no favorites and a child who did his duty should certainly be treated differently from one who failed to do so, the very act of distinguishing between them inevitably encouraged emulation. This in itself was admittedly a wicked passion, which Dwight condemned as a cause of much evil.

He wished all mortals to be actuated by a desire to do their best for the glory of the Creator. Unfortunately, this motive seldom exists in the mind of a child and, therefore, no appeal could be made to it. Even if it did exist, a child would still need to be told whether his performance had been good or bad. Dwight concluded that emulation ought to be avoided as much as possible but con-

fessed he did not know how to prevent it entirely. He found an analogous situation in the state; men must have government, but the existence of government creates distinctions in society because of the power and influence it commits to certain individuals for the public benefit; this, in turn, excites evil passions among the ambitious. Evidently, the evils of emulation spring out of causes beyond control.<sup>20</sup>

Taking a practical view of all such problems, Dwight steered a sane course between Scylla and Charybdis. On the principle that it was proper and necessary to let his students know when he approved their conduct, he distributed "little prizes," proportioning these rewards not to the absolute attainments of his pupils but to their progress.<sup>21</sup> He made it a custom on Wednesday afternoons for the scholars to speak "a short speech" and then choose sides for a spelling contest, the winners being granted a quarter of an hour to play before the others were let out. Each year Dwight arranged a public "exhibition" held in the meetinghouse like a college Commencement. Valedictories, orations, and honors were probably all included in the ceremony, for Yale traditions, which meant so much to Dwight, survived in more than one form at his Greenfield academy. Being so alertly awake to the dangers of emulation, he was doubtless able to establish adequate safeguards against them.

Out of the classroom as well as in it, Dwight sought to mold the character of his students, morally and intellectually, according to the high standard that was his. No detail was too small to deserve his attention. Remembering his own physical breakdown, he guarded the children's health as carefully as his own. He believed in fresh air, exercise, and food "neither rich nor dainty, but plain, clean, good and plenty." He encouraged athletic games and sports which "brace the form, or nerve the mind," because

My country's youth, I see with pain,  
The customs of their sires disdain,  
Quit the bold pastimes of the green,  
That strengthen striplings into men,  
Grovel at inns, at cards, and dice,  
The means of foul disease, and vice,  
And waste, in gaming, drink, and strife,  
Health, honor, fame, and peace, and life.<sup>22</sup>

It was far better for boys to learn to wrestle, leap, and run, to play competitive games and prize the "palm" once it was won, than to lounge with vile companions in taverns "where youth to vice, and ruin, run." He sought to keep them from tricks and lies and all activities which tended to develop such evil "arts." He tried to instill in them a hatred for gossip, tales, and scandals, and a love of kindness and truth. He taught them "gentle manners," and "sweet civility," courtesy to strangers, and faithfulness to friends. He attempted to inspire a taste for books which in mature years would keep them from evil companions, lead them to spend their evenings at home, and open the door of learning. Dwight observed that many men who had never had the advantage of collegiate education, but who had gained a love of books, improved their leisure hours by reading and thus grew in wisdom until they became distinguished citizens, "the boast, and blessing, of our land."<sup>23</sup>

He demanded prompt obedience to the bells which regulated the periods of study and play, because untimely hours destroyed "health, order, temperance and every joy." Remembering the lesson of his own undergraduate career, he tried to show his students the evil of wasting time and the necessity of using every moment profitably. In matters great or small Dwight believed, "'Tis application masters all things," and so he urged his pupils never to think a task too great but, using their time to best advantage, to work hard at it, for industry might counterbalance many other deficiencies. Thrift and respect for good government were other cardinal principles with Dwight. He emphasized the fundamental importance of teaching children to appreciate the freedom and privileges their forefathers had won for them. In that stirring era of the American Revolution love of country bulked large in the educational process, particularly with a patriot of Dwight's quality.<sup>24</sup> These were the virtues to be learned at his academy.

In inculcating them Dwight was aware of his own grave responsibility. He knew that discouragement or careless negligence on his part might be fatal. He admitted that, no matter how assiduous a parent or teacher might be, the child would inevitably transgress not once but many times, repeating the fault again and again. If one became discouraged or lax, the child would win his own sinful way and become "master of the field." Realizing the impossibility of



keeping him from crimes by reason alone, Dwight emphasized the necessity of implanting good habits in the child from the beginning. These, he said, must be drilled in so deeply that they cannot be lost because

Habits alone thro' life endure,  
 Habits alone your child secure:  
 To habit, bid the blessings grow,  
 Habits alone yield good below.

. . . . .

As weeds, self-sown, demand no toil,  
 But flourish in their native soil,  
 Root deep, grow high, with vigour bloom,  
 And send forth poison, for perfume;  
 So faults, inborn, spontaneous rise,  
 And daily wax in strength, and size,  
 Ripen, with neither toil, nor care,  
 And choke each germ of virtue there.<sup>25</sup>

To sow the seeds of habitual virtue required a careful, tireless gardener who permitted no discouragement to keep him from persevering. In the end it was worth all the trouble because children thus trained developed into the best husbands and wives; they made better parents; they themselves were happier and wiser and had a more joyful old age; they were better companions and better citizens. The lessons of the training he himself had received at the hands of his mother, as well as the observations of his own teaching experience, were not lost on Dwight.

\* \* \*

Unorthodox in his conception of discipline, Dwight also held stubbornly to an heretical belief in the wisdom of educating "females." At Greenfield, as at Northampton, he welcomed girls to his school as cordially as he did boys. What was worse, he then lavished as much attention upon them as upon the more deserving males. Indeed, he climaxed his error by exposing the delicate female mind to the same severe intellectual regimen that he prescribed for masculine intelligence. It was in this respect that Dwight lapsed most alarmingly from contemporary standards.

Those standards still accorded with the sentiments expressed in

1645 by Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts concerning the tragic case of the wife of the Connecticut Governor Hopkins. She was, wrote Winthrop,

a godly young woman, and of special parts, who was fallen into a sad infirmity, the loss of her understanding and reason, which had been growing upon her diverse years, by occasion of her giving herself wholly to reading and writing, and had written many books. Her husband, being very loving and tender to her, was loath to grieve her; but he saw his error, when it was too late. For if she had attended her household affairs, and such things as belong to women, and not gone out of her way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper for men, whose minds are stronger, etc., she had kept her wits, and might have improved them usefully and honorably in the place God hath set her.<sup>26</sup>

This was a warning which succeeding generations long heeded. The idea of higher education for women remained esoteric, especially in the conservative East, until well into the nineteenth century. As late as 1861 the establishment of Vassar College caused concern. The best circles, even then, grew nervous over the grave issues involved. Was an education equivalent to that given men, appropriate for a woman? To most it appeared to be quite out of her sphere. How could she stand the physical strain of exhaustive study? In acquiring learning might she not lose her feminine charm and degenerate into a bore? Every one agreed that Mr. Vassar's gift was generous, but was it wise? In Dwight's time, since no one thought of indulging in the philanthropy of founding women's colleges, the problem caused no trouble. Masculine monopoly of collegiate education was accepted as proper in the nature of things. True, in 1778 President Stiles presented to a proud little girl a document certifying, under his signature, that she had passed creditably examinations in all the studies required for admission to Yale and that one circumstance alone made it impossible to admit her to that institution—she was female instead of male.<sup>27</sup> Only a few eccentrics, lonely in their boldness, dared to doubt the wisdom of this dispensation. Dwight was one who, earlier than most, suggested alterations.

However perfect America was in many respects, Dwight conceded that she was defective in the way she educated her "young

misses." Feeling that "efforts of a higher nature" should be made, and unwilling to wait for others to assume the lead, he proceeded to put his own theories into practice. He recognized that ability and education were not synonymous, that the latter was no substitute for the former. When his son, at table, once expressed a low opinion of an aunt's "understanding," Dwight reproved the young man not only for making such an unkind criticism in public but for failing to take a true view of the matter. Dwight pointed out to him that this particular aunt was a woman of "very respectable understanding"; on subjects with which she was acquainted, she judged and decided as well as most people of either sex. Lacking the advantage of a literary education, she did not possess the extensive information which many men and some women derived from books. So far as this deficiency existed, said Dwight, it was her misfortune, not her fault—and a misfortune then common to a large number of "respectable" persons of both sexes. It did not prevent her from being a person of "understanding."

Firmly convinced that women were intelligent beings "capable of mental improvement," Dwight maintained that "the great doctrines of physical and moral science" are as intelligible to the female mind as to the male. All that needed to be done was to make these mysteries less technical, to strip them of "unnecessary accompaniments" so as to give them the aspect of common sense. In this simplified form they might be introduced with advantage into every female academy where the instructor was competent to teach them. Saying it was high time that women should be considered less as "pretty" and more as "rational, immortal" beings, he urged that so far as the circumstances of a family permitted, the daughters should be led early to the attainment of "solid sense and sound wisdom." At Greenfield he offered them an opportunity to obtain an education as advanced as that available to their brothers.<sup>28</sup>

It was true that girls in America were sent to school at an early age. In the elementary stages they learned to spell, read, write, and do arithmetic, while in boarding schools and academies they studied English grammar, composition, criticism, geography, and sometimes a little history. But only in a few places were they taught "moral science"; rarely did they ascend to the higher branches of mathematics; and the languages, Latin and French, were sadly mixed



with embroidery, drawing, and music.<sup>29</sup> This sort of education did not satisfy Dwight.

He wanted them, as well as boys, to have the benefit of instruction "calculated to expand the mind and amend the heart." They too should be lured to "sober thought, useful knowledge, and the best principles." He agreed with contemporary opinion that girls should learn to guide the needle, wheel, and shuttle, to preside over "domestic scenes," and master the housewife's "arts." They should be trained in things of a useful nature so that they could soothe "corroding care" and "bid life with added pleasure glow."<sup>30</sup> But this was not enough. Dwight sought to develop their minds and character as well.

As part of the process he did not fear to permit girls and boys to congregate together in a way downright promiscuous according to the prevailing notions of the time. During this postwar period, as academies began to loom more prominently upon the American educational scene, some of them did admit both girls and boys. Deerfield Academy, opened in 1799, handled the problem with appropriate precautions. There the two sexes were forbidden to meet on the school grounds or within the walls of the institution except at meals and prayers. Nor could they walk, ride, or visit together on pain of a fine of one dollar. Both sexes entered their own distinct classrooms through separate entrances, and a high board fence divided the yard into mutually exclusive compartments for play. Dwight felt no need to erect such barriers at Greenfield.

He even went so far as to advocate physical exercise for girls as well as boys. To him it was deeply distressing that, unlike their English sisters, so many American women parted with their "bloom" before they were thirty. This he attributed to several causes. Most of them, he thought, were excessively slender, and without hesitation he laid the blame to reckless "abstemiousness." Although still unable to calculate diets in sums of calories and vitamins, American women even then, in Dwight's estimation, guarded their figures overzealously. He considered the lack of sufficient exercise "abroad" a still more malignant influence, and lamented that "sedentariness" seemed to be considered as an integral part of feminine gentility. This, he observed scornfully, was why "walking is very little practised; and riding on horse-back,

notwithstanding it exhibits the female figure to so much advantage, is almost out of the question." Dwight regretted, too, that "multitudes" of American women lost their teeth at an "untimely date." For this sad state of affairs, he had an easy remedy. Mothers could preserve their children's teeth by compelling them to "commence life with vigorous exercise, and continue it," and by requiring them to avoid hot drinks, to "eat milk" or dilute their tea and coffee with it; and "to make their teeth cold by agitating cold water in the mouth five times a day; that is, once in the morning, once in the evening, and once after each meal." Dwight even dared to suggest:

Could we learn wisdom from the Asiatics, and habituate ourselves to regular bathing; and follow that of our ancestors, by permitting children when at school to play during the session half an hour in the morning, and half an hour in the afternoon encouraging those of both sexes to vigorous activity; the work of preserving health would in a great measure be accomplished.<sup>31</sup>

He was convinced that, until radical changes along these lines could be consummated, the women of New England would continue to yield their health, youth, and beauty as "an untimely sacrifice to the Moloch of fashion." Although he would be startled if he could see the America of today with its miracles of plumbing, tooth pastes, golf courses, tennis courts, and gymnasiums, Dwight, with rare foresight, had a vision of a future generation, male and female, far healthier than his own.

His special quarrel was with "fashionable education." This was his term for the process by which socially ambitious parents trained their children to move at ease in "elegant" society. Nancy Shippen was an example of the sort of thing he lamented. When Nancy was a gay belle at boarding school her mother wrote her not of the tremendous struggle for independence then raging, but to remind her that needlework was a most important branch of female education, and to learn how her daughter "improved" in her "work," specifically, in holding her head and shoulders, in making a curtsy, in entering and leaving a room, in "giving and receiving," in holding her knife and fork, in walking and "seting." These things, Mrs. Shippen warned her daughter, contributed so much to

a good appearance that they were of tremendous consequence. Perfection in "the Graces" she considered "absolutely necessary to make you shine." <sup>32</sup>

Dwight objected that parents such as Mrs. Shippen wished their children to acquire skill in music, dancing, embroidery, and similar "accomplishments" in order to make them "objects of admiration." He conceded that the accomplishments were not evil in themselves, but criticized this type of education because it led children to believe that the primary end of their efforts was appearance only. He charged that it taught boys as well as girls to place an exaggerated value upon the color, quality, and fashion of their clothes; upon the proper mode of bowing, walking, and dancing; and upon the nice observance of the established rules of polite behavior. In order to mingle without awkwardness in the empty chat of fashionable conversation—"those mere vibrations of the tongue"—they read only to appear with advantage, and therefore investigated nothing heavier than novels, plays, and similar "trifles." They learned to loathe thinking and to regard study with terror. Nothing in such training, said Dwight, stimulated the mind to new exertion, tested its true capacity and power, or gave it opportunity to grow and develop. Destitute of the habit of labor, the young man learned to dread exertion as a calamity. The sight of a classic author gave him a chill; a lesson in Locke or Euclid, a mental ague. The mental sloth thus generated prevented growth and ruined hope of future worth.

Dwight maintained that the human mind, like the body, acquires strength only by exercise. To attain its greatest strength the mind must be exercised daily to its utmost power. He argued that, if Goliath had never exerted the powers of his body, he would have been an infant in strength; if Newton had never exerted those of his mind, he would have been an infant in "understanding." In fact, Dwight defined genius in the abstract as "a mere capacity for exertion." This, he said, is the gift of nature and all that she gives. The utmost of this capacity can never be conjectured, until the mind has in a long continued, habitual course made its most vigorous efforts. If one wished a child to possess the greatest strength of which he was capable, one must induce him to make the most powerful exertions. "Fashionable education" could never accom-



plish this. "Hard study, a thorough investigation of mathematical science, and a resolute attention to the most powerful efforts of distinguished Logicians; in a word, an old-fashioned, rigid, academical education will ever be found indispensable to the youth, who is destined to possess mental greatness." <sup>33</sup> This was the guiding principle behind Dwight's educational methods and theories.

When the standard of reading for boys was light, he said, that for girls was made lamentably lighter. If boys were exposed to philosophy and mathematics, girls would escape with history, poetry, and a few "judicious discourses in morality, and religion." Usually girls "sink down to songs, novels, and plays." The consequences of such frivolous reading were fatal because the girl's first novel introduced her to a world totally unlike anything which she would ever experience in reality.

In the romantic literature of the day, Dwight complained, she found a region filled not with houses inhabited by men, women, and children, but with a succession of splendid palaces and gloomy castles, inhabited by tenants half human and half angelic, or haunted by fiends. The heroes were invariably handsome, brave, generous, faithful, affectionate, and accomplished. If they were not already wealthy, a rich relative always died at the proper moment to supply them with a fortune. Every heroine was "a compound of all that is graceful and lovely," with a complexion which "outvies the snow, and shames the rose." In contrast, the villains were the blackest of the black, "iron-handed misers, profligate guardians, traitorous servants, and hags, not excelled by those of Lapland itself." The fields and gardens were "second-hand copies of paradise" on which the dawn and evening beam with "every tint of elegance, and every ray of glory." This ideal world became so familiar to the young girl that she imagined it as her proper residence. She learned to think of herself as the heroine of some such delightful place, and to expect fortunes, villas, and Edens to spring up everywhere in her own life to promote her enjoyment. "In a word, the curse pronounced upon mankind, is to her, to lose its gloomy influence: and sorrow, and toil, are to fly from the path in which she chooses to walk through life."

But, said Dwight, disillusionment, truth, and disappointment were bound to come to her. In real life her friends and servants

would be faithless, the days cloudy and wet, the streets muddy and dusty. Her suitor would not be "a Corydon, a Strephon, or even a Grandison" looking for an angel, but a man looking for a wife to preside at his table and direct his household. He would be an ordinary human being who intended to live by business and good sense, incapable of lisping the pretty things harmonious to her delicately attuned ear. Indeed, she would be an easy prey to some man of "art and mischief" who thought the conquest worth obtaining. A stranger from infancy to patience and fortitude, she must encounter suffering and sorrow. Never having been acquainted with religion, she would have none of the principles religion approves. The consciousness of virtue, the dignified pleasure of having performed one's duty, the serene remembrance of a useful life, the hope of an interest in the Redeemer, and the promise of a glorious inheritance in the favor of God, she would never find by reading novels. The gulf between the latter and the Bible was wide. A bewildered voyager amid the billows of affliction, she would seek in vain for a pilot or a shore. Dwight drew a tragic picture of her lot.

He was further alarmed by another evil resulting from such education. Under its influence the youth of both sexes were left exposed to the "principles of enchantment and perdition" which eighteenth century philosophy held out so successfully to minds "destitute of sound principle, and defensive prudence." Unaccustomed to thinking for themselves, they were pleased to find others to do it for them. To such soft, dainty minds philosophical fiction was far more congenial than the toil of vigorous, sober thought by which alone truth could be comprehended. Having imbibed the wretched doctrines of infidel philosophers, such a mind was unlikely ever to escape absolute ruin.

"Fashionable education" might be intended for superior refinement, but instead of being a refinement of the heart or understanding, Dwight defined it as merely that of an imagination already soft and sickly from the luscious indulgence of fancy. He denounced it because it placed the highest value upon what was least important, and disregarded what was to him of greatest consequence. The system omitted whatever might enable a child to be what he ought to be—wise, virtuous, and useful. *What he is*, was of little consequence; *what he appears to be*, was of inestimable importance. In-

stead of being educated, the mind was left to the care of accident and fashion. With such an education, a son or daughter could not become a man or a woman, but merely "a well dressed bundle of accomplishments"; not a blessing nor an heir of immortality but "a fribble or a doll." He or she might make a good musician, a good dancer, and a good frolicker, but never a good husband or wife.<sup>34</sup>

In spite of the need for improvement, Dwight defended the women of America as equal to those of other countries, although he admitted that in "the most fashionable life" we had

frivolous women, who having nothing to do, or choosing to do nothing of a useful nature, find time hang heavily on them. To relieve themselves from the ennui, flowing of course from want of regular and useful engagements, women of this description crowd to the theatre, the assembly-room, the card-table, routs, and squeezes; flutter from door to door on ceremonious visits, and from shop to shop to purchase what they do not want, and to look at what they do not intend to purchase; hurry to watering places, to recover health which they have not lost; and hurry back again in pursuit of pleasure which they cannot find. Happily, the number of these is not very great, even in our cities.<sup>35</sup>

Considering their situation as a whole, Dwight concluded that it was only owing to their innate good sense that American women were not "absolute idiots." Fortunately, he found consolation in the knowledge that the country seemed to be growing more willing to improve the educational opportunities open to females. He hoped the time would soon come when masculine negligence would no longer permit schools for girls to be inferior to those for boys.

Although lack of data made him refuse to say categorically that the sexes were equal in ability, Dwight felt that women did not lag behind men in their capacity or disposition to improve. He pointed out that, in spite of all the disadvantages under which females throughout the world had long labored, history contained many examples to prove that they had become both good and great. He classed Queen Elizabeth as the best sovereign, next to Alfred, who had ever sat upon the English throne. In fact, he thought women rulers usually excelled men, and even had a good word to say for Catherine the Great. He called her the best of Russia's monarchs, making her acknowledged deficiencies a relative matter. His tribute to Catherine is surprising because the most important consideration



behind Dwight's confidence in females was his conviction that they surpassed men in moral excellence. Compared with morals, intelligence took second place in his estimation. Women, admitted Dwight, were more frequently persons of piety than men (their dependent position contributed to make them so). He expected to find the population of heaven preponderantly feminine.<sup>36</sup>

One other factor strengthened Dwight's belief in the wisdom of educating females. Doubtless remembering the immense influence his mother had exercised over his own educational training, Dwight decided that a mother's instructions were more important than a father's. He said it was she who gave the first turn and cast to a child's mind. Her whole province was of infinite moment. It was, therefore, vital that she should be qualified for it by being given an adequate training herself. Dwight confidently suggested that if this could be accomplished on a sufficiently large scale, the whole state of society might well be changed for the better and raised to a dignity of which it was otherwise incapable.<sup>37</sup> He was thinking in terms not merely of feminism but of society at large.

It was to this high end that he bent his own efforts. In Dwight's day colleges exclusively for women were undreamed of; the time was not yet ripe. Dwight passed his thought on the matter to his sons and grandsons, as well as to many of those who studied under him, but it did not bulk large in the country's thinking until long after his death. For many years, academic institutions failed to equal the "extensive and solid" course of study which Dwight gave girls at his Greenfield academy. However, at an early date he set a valuable example. To his exertions and influence the women of this country owe a large debt.<sup>38</sup>

Dwight, too, had a faith in the power of education which has long characterized American life. In a democracy like the newly established United States he felt it was fundamentally important that the citizens be enlightened. They must be able to judge the qualifications and conduct of those who held office, and perhaps to assume office themselves. Education of the proper kind diffused knowledge, virtue, and piety—the qualities requisite for any society that was to live in divine favor. Without it, Dwight held, there was little hope for the survival of the republic.

With such a clear conception of the high purpose he was serving,

Dwight labored in his school to obtain the best progress of his pupils. They did not soon forget him. His students left Greenfield Hill with a memory not of fine buildings and gay times but of an inspiring man. Most of them later considered it rare good fortune to have been under his influence during their early years. Textbooks were then inferior, and the course of study, even in college, was exceedingly limited when compared to that available today. Dictionaries, grammars, commentaries were meager; the aids to study, inadequate. Then even more than now it was the character of the teacher himself which gave to any course its highest charm and value. One who knew Dwight well, wrote of him: "It is almost impossible for any one to be in his company, and not grow wiser and better."<sup>39</sup> Through the power of his personality he awakened many a youth to an interest in things intellectual as keen as his own. Dwight's influence over his students was deep and lasting. His was the gift of a great teacher.<sup>40</sup>

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Much as Dwight liked the life and work at Greenfield Hill, the time came when his congregation began to fear they might lose him. After a decade his reputation had grown to such proportions that it was only natural for him to think of other and bigger things. In taking the position at Greenfield, he had refused a flattering call from Charlestown; and since then, according to his mother's testimony, he had "repeatedly" rejected "very lucrative offers."<sup>41</sup> In 1794 the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church in Albany, New York, invited him to become their minister. The call was unanimous and the terms financially liberal. He would hardly have considered breaking his ties with Greenfield for a smaller salary. But Dwight again declined. Shortly after sending his answer, he explained his reasons in a letter,<sup>42</sup> dated March 16, 1795, to Philip Van Rensselaer, an influential member of the church. Dwight told this "good friend" that he might have lived in Albany "with much satisfaction," especially since he would have been near the Van Rensselaers; he thought, too, that as far as doctrine was concerned he might have been able to get along harmoniously with the people because he agreed with the main doctrines of their Confession of Faith and Catechism. But apparently they wanted him to subscribe

to a formal declaration of faith which Dwight considered "too absolute and strict for the prosperity of their church."

It contained certain points, moreover, with which he could not agree. He admitted that these were "not very material" but said "a declaration that I believed little things to be Scriptural when I did not, would be as false as a like declaration regarding great things." This then was an obstacle which could not be overcome. Furthermore, Dwight pointed out that, although the Dutch Church's articles permitted baptism only on the principles in which Dwight himself believed, their ministers and people departed from the official creed and children were actually baptized according to principles widely different. Such a breach between theory and practice Dwight deplored as fraught with ominous consequences, and he told Van Rensselaer: "What I subscribe, I must strictly adhere to & without departure." Even if these difficulties were removed, he said he could not leave Greenfield "without the utmost difficulty" because "my people will hear nothing of my leaving them."<sup>43</sup>

In this connection there is a story, handed down by word of mouth in the Woolsey family, which may throw further light upon Dwight's attitude at this time, although there is no written evidence to support it. According to this tradition, Dwight was worried over finances (his salary was then in fact one year in arrears), and while weighing the offer from Albany he wrote to one of the Woolsey sisters explaining, doubtless among other things, that although the salary there would be about the same as at Greenfield, marriage and funeral fees would be enough larger to be worth considering. He confessed that he was undecided whether to make the change or not. The sister replied with sound advice in this inspired way:

Let marriage rites and funeral fee  
To you no object be,  
The living for a trifle join  
And let the dead go free.

Have you not heard that Dr. Stiles  
Totters on his last legs,  
And to New Haven you'll be call'd  
As sure as eggs is eggs?<sup>44</sup>



Whether or not Dwight stooped to thoughts of marriage and funeral fees, the call to New Haven soon came. In May of 1795 the death of Dr. Stiles left vacant the Presidency of Yale College.

Clerical and public opinion throughout the state immediately acknowledged Dwight as the obvious man for the post. His loyalty to Yale, his experience, character, and ability—all so thoroughly proved—qualified him above all others. No other candidate seems to have been considered. It was taken for granted that Dwight would be named Stiles' successor.<sup>45</sup> However, as when he was ordained at Greenfield Hill, some contentious, ultrasqueamish person did dare again to raise the question of Dwight's attitude toward the Half-Way Covenant. Evidently, in reply to a request for an authoritative statement, Dwight explained his position to a friend, the Honorable Jonathan Ingersoll, who favored his appointment. In a letter dated June 24, 1795, the day the Yale Corporation met to elect a President, Dwight told Ingersoll:

The admission of children to baptism on what is commonly called the half-way plan, has never appeared to me sufficient reason to refuse communing with a church; nor, indeed, do I consider it as having anything to do with the subject of communing. I have repeatedly administered the Lord's Supper to the Church at Stamford, in which that practice has always existed. You will make the necessary conclusion.

It appears to me poorly worth the while for any man to employ himself in circulating such reports with reference to the appointment proposed; and (shall I say) almost equally so for my friends to employ themselves in obviating them when spread. I thank my friends, however, & heartily; and you, in particular, for this instance of your good will.

But I do not court the appointment. Let those who do, take it. I am already happily settled, and in a station little exposed to envy or obloquy. To build up a ruined college is a difficult task. It is a pity the man who wishes for it should not be gratified. I am not that man.<sup>46</sup>

Perhaps Ingersoll used this letter to quiet whatever fears may have existed, but they could not have been serious. The Corporation elected Dwight forthwith, and appointed a committee "to solicit his acceptance of this call and invitation." In a letter dated June 25, the Senior Fellow notified Dwight of the vote, urging him to consider it "as an important call of Divine Providence."<sup>47</sup> This proved

good advice, for the people of Greenfield Hill immediately began to move heaven and earth to keep him.

In eighteenth century New England, when a church invited a man to settle as its minister, he was expected to remain for life. It was customary, after a probationary period of preaching as a candidate, to appoint a young man with no previous pastoral experience, and unless there developed some imperative reason for a change, such as health or heresy, it was a serious breach of courtesy to call a minister from one church to another. Hence it was that, contrary to the itinerant tendencies of the profession today, clergymen enjoyed long tenures, pastorates of from twenty-five to fifty years being not at all miraculous.

In Dwight the people of Greenfield Hill had found the man they wanted. He had, indeed, exceeded their best expectations. Having united all factions in a blessed harmony, he had strengthened the church in grace and numbers. As he had grown in fame and stature, his church had benefited accordingly. He was more than popular; his people were proud of him. His school, his celebrity as a preacher, poet, educator, and thinker, his wide acquaintance with distinguished persons in literary and other circles, and his hospitality brought many men "of superior character" to the village. Greenfield Hill became a spot of "great notoriety," the "resort of learning, of talents, of refinement, and of piety." He changed the whole life and character of the place. Through the charm of his companionship, through his extraordinary faculty for entering helpfully into the experiences and problems of others, he was a force which in countless ways enriched the life of that community.<sup>48</sup> From the beginning the people had expected him to live permanently among them; as time brought them closer, they hoped more than ever that it would be that way. Now the prospect of losing him disheartened the whole parish.

Fully aware that the situation required skillful handling, Dwight wisely requested the Consociation to give him their advice on the Yale appointment. Before that body could meet, the parish, on August 5, 1795, held a meeting of its own. Unanimously they voted their unwillingness to dismiss Dwight that he might go to Yale. With the same unanimity they agreed that ever since he had settled among them "there hath been a constant, uninterrupted har-

mony & good agreement between him and the people of this place," which appeared likely to be permanent if he remained. They maintained that, in spite of the fact their tax "to support the gospel hath been higher than perhaps is common in our neighboring societies, yet we are of the opinion that it has been as cheerfully complied with, & as punctually paid as could be expected, or as is common in other societies, and perhaps more so, & that there is no present appearance that we shall fail of fulfilling our agreement with Dr. Dwight." In this connection it is pertinent to note that Dwight's salary from November 1, 1793, was at that moment still unpaid. Declaring themselves unaware of any cause for discontent on Dwight's part, while they on their part were "perfectly satisfied" with his public ministration and private conduct, the parish united in the fear that Dwight's departure might have "a tendency to disunite the people from that steady and uniform religious sentiment & opinion that appears to be predominant at this time." They therefore deemed a separation would "not only be unjust but impolitic, hurtful to the feelings and interests of the people as well as detrimental to religion in this place." In conclusion a committee of twelve, representing the ecclesiastical society, was appointed to "wate" upon the Consociation and lay before them the sentiments of the parish.<sup>49</sup>

When on August 11 the Consociation came together in solemn conclave, with twelve ministers and ten "messengers" present, the committee performed its function as best it could. But, after weighing, most seriously, all the pros and cons, the Consociation reached the judgment that Dwight's election as President of Yale was sufficient reason for him to desire a separation from his people and it was their duty to consent to it. Dwight was then asked to appear and state his personal views; he "conceived it to be his duty to accept of his appointment." Whereupon, the council formally voted Dwight's dismissal as pastor of the Greenfield church, justifying the painful action on the ground that, since the new office to which he had been chosen was "one of the most important to the interests of society and religion," "principles of benevolence" dictated that a lesser should give way to a greater good. Thus was dissolved a pastoral relationship cemented by "many years of love and usefulness."<sup>50</sup>



In their first bitter disappointment, the parish, a few days later, took belligerent steps to settle with Dr. Dwight regarding "claims for damage to the Society in consequence of his taking a dismissal from us."<sup>51</sup> But this petulant effort came to nothing. On August 17 Dwight, undeterred, addressed a letter to the Yale Corporation accepting the post to which they had invited him, and adding:

Allow me, gentlemen, to say, that few undertakings in human life appear to me to be fraught with more difficulties, than this on which I am now venturing. It is a consolation to reflect, that, when faithfully pursued, there are not many which are more beneficial to mankind. The Most High has been pleased in his providence to call me to this employment; I feel myself obliged, though not without great diffidence to obey the summons. On his direction and blessing I hope I primarily depend, and next on the effectual support and counsel of the body who are his ministers in this solemn concern.<sup>52</sup>

It apparently required some weeks for Dwight to make his final peace with the Greenfield Society. The state legislature may have helped, for at its October session a committee reported that, on all former occasions when a minister had been removed from his parish to the Presidency of Yale College, the General Assembly had made provision for discharging "such sum as the Parish were entitled to receive, on account of such removal"; and they said "some money will be wanted for that purpose on this occasion."<sup>53</sup> If the legislators acted favorably, they probably eased the situation. In any case, on December 2 he signed receipts for the salary due him from November 1, 1793 to August 12, 1795, releasing the parish from all demands on his part.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, it was not until two years later that the Society voted that "Dr. Dwight shall be invited to preach here whenever convenient," indicating that all was forgiven. All was not so soon forgotten. Tradition has it that the people would never hear in their pulpit any of the ministers who had taken part in the fatal decision of the Consociation supporting Dwight's dismissal.<sup>55</sup> And for ten years the church remained without a settled pastor. Finally, in the autumn of 1805, following consultation with Dwight himself, Horace Holly was installed. After Dwight, Greenfield was not easily satisfied. To find his equal proved a difficult task.

Unreasonable though the Greenfield people were at the end, their argument against Dwight's going to New Haven was not then so selfish as it might seem today. Instead of an institution with students counted in thousands and funds figured in millions, Yale in 1795 was a small, struggling college with only one hundred and ten students paying thin tuition fees for what she had to give. Dwight taught as many as fifty and sixty in his own academy at Greenfield. As a place to live, New Haven offered no particular advantage over Fairfield. She had a slightly larger population and somewhat more business, but both places were primarily agricultural, with populations of about four thousand. Fairfield, too, was a flourishing port; she had less foreign commerce but served as the center of a thriving trade along the Connecticut coast west of the "Hooestennuc" River.<sup>56</sup> It was long after Dwight's time that New Haven developed into the industrial city familiar to later generations; for him there was little to choose between the two towns.

On the other hand, the position at Yale was undoubtedly more important. Among the graduates of Yale who were to feel the stamp of Dwight's teaching, many later distinguished themselves in every field—as ministers, teachers, college presidents, judges, poets, scientists, and officers high in the national and state governments. Through generations of these Yale men, Dwight was to exercise an ever widening influence which extended far into the next century. With this prospect in mind, Dwight, then in his prime at the age of forty-three, withdrew from an unusually happy pastorate to devote himself to the larger task of building a university.

## CHAPTER VII

### President of Yale

CONFIDENT THAT his leadership meant better things for the institution, the Yale Corporation lost no time in inducting the new President into office. On the afternoon of Tuesday, September 8, 1795, only three weeks after Dwight had achieved his dismissal from Greenfield Hill, he was inaugurated. The date deserves notice because it marks the beginning of a new era in the history of Yale College.

It was the day before Commencement, and despite wet weather and an epidemic of dysentery in the town, the occasion attracted a large audience. The proceedings followed ancient academic precedent, but Dwight's friends may well have felt that they were witnessing an event significant for Yale's future, not just another college ceremony. The Reverend Eliphalet Williams of East Hartford, being Senior Fellow, presided, as he had done seventeen years before when Stiles had taken office. The Honorable and Reverend Corporation with a numerous assembly of clergy being convened, Dr. Williams opened the exercises with "a short and pertinent prayer." Whereupon the President elect publicly "exhibited his assent to the Confession of Faith and Rules of Ecclesiastical discipline agreed upon by the Churches of this State, A.D. 1708," and pledged himself to instruct the students committed to his care according to the prescriptions of that sacred canon. Having taken this safeguard against heresy, the Senior Fellow "pronounced" a Latin oration "well adapted to the occasion," committing the government and instruction of the college to the new President. In the name and by the authority of the Corporation, he formally constituted Dr. Dwight President of Yale College, investing him with the rights and privileges pertaining to the office and delivering



to him the charter, records, keys, and seal of the college. President Dwight then delivered his inaugural address, an "elegant Latin Oration" apparently no longer extant, and, after the students had sung an anthem called "The Heavenly Vision," closed "the Solemnity with a Blessing." That evening alumni back for Commencement gathered in the college yard where "very good" music, fireworks, and "an illumination of 8 candles to each window" provided a cheerful atmosphere in which to talk over old times and discuss the college's prospects under the new administration.<sup>1</sup>

The Reverend John Pierce was present and, being a young man only two years out of Harvard, thought the experience worth noting in his diary. Journeying from Providence, he had left East Haven a little after sunrise that morning and recorded rather sadly that he arrived in New Haven "dripping with rain." But the rain, which seldom shows more respect for academic functions at Yale than at Harvard, continued only until noon, and he found Parmele's "a very good tavern." These circumstances, as well as the inaugural ceremonies and the events of the evening, apparently satisfied him. It was the joyous manner in which Yale greeted the following dawn that distressed him. At that unearthly hour, when the sun began to dispel night's darkness, a thunderous noise immediately beneath his window suddenly threw him from the peace of deep slumber into a state of awful apprehension. He confessed:

It seemed, as if the earth shook from its centre, and the foundation of the hills was removed. A fit of trembling seized me, and tears bedewed my cheeks. My first impression was, that the end of all things was assuredly come; and that I should immediately be called to give an account of the deeds done in the body. The ringing of bells and maturer reflection relieved my fears.<sup>2</sup>

He realized then that the noise had been only the discharge of a cannon. For a sensitive young Harvard clergyman unacquainted with this gay custom it was a rude awakening. But for Yale it was Commencement day, and the new President was to preside!

At the appointed hour, "XI, A.M.," in Dr. Dana's Brick Church, President Dwight started the actual exercises more sedately with a prayer. Then followed a funeral anthem by the students, and a eulogy on the late President Stiles by Professor Meigs. Perform-

ing "to good acceptance," seniors, selected on the basis of scholastic distinction, next presented a program including such varied items as,

A forensic Disputation on the Question—Is Virtue its own Reward?  
A Dissertation on the Benefits of Theatrical Establishments.  
An English Oration on Female Education; and  
A Dialogue exhibiting the pernicious Effects of Gaming.

The salutatory was in Latin, but English sufficed for an oration on Agriculture.

In the afternoon there was more, with performances by graduate candidates, and finally the conferring of degrees, thirty-four B.A.'s, eleven M.A.'s, and six honorary M.A.'s. The meetinghouse was not crowded, and there was no clapping, for the "greatest decorum" was observed. Although the Harvard critic may have gazed upon these things with jaundiced eye, he admitted that the students were "handsomely dressed." He thought, however, that they resorted to more gestures than was common at Cambridge, and suggested that their compositions might have been more "chaste," had they enjoyed the criticisms of Harvard's Professor Pearson. He was shocked when the students performed an anthem (probably the funereal one honoring the late President Stiles) "in the most boisterous and tasteless manner imaginable." Having begun the day to the terrifying tune of cannon, perhaps he took quiet satisfaction in also observing: "The President in giving the degrees was obviously embarrassed; and, as he had not perfectly committed the Latin form to memory, he made frequent blunders in reciting it." Can the testimony of such a witness be trusted? <sup>3</sup>

Blunders or no blunders, with the inauguration and his first Commencement behind him, Dwight moved his family from Greenfield Hill early the following December.<sup>4</sup> To be in New Haven again must have seemed to him like coming home. He knew it well, and liked it much. But it was quite different from the city familiar to his present-day successor. In 1795 there were only some four thousand inhabitants, and all was on a simple scale. Streets and sidewalks boasted no hard pavement to tire man and beast. None was needed when a single public hackney coach, and a few horses and gigs, satisfied the demand for local transportation. Sewers and

running water were fastidious conveniences yet to be achieved in a more Utopian future. No street lamps broke the black of moonless nights. But by day strangers had little difficulty finding their way, for the town was small and laid out in squares according to an orderly plan. In general the streets could be depended upon to cross one another regularly at right angles, and, though "rather sandy," they were wide and straight.

Everything revolved around the large open square in the center, half of which was "a beautiful slope" and half "a handsome level." The Green, however, remained "deformed by unsightly knolls and hollows" until near the close of the century when that public-spirited citizen, James Hillhouse, despite strenuous opposition, ruthlessly plowed it level and planted it with elms. Thereby, in time, he brought about a transformation which ever since has been a source of local pride. The beauty of the spot, in the opinion of Dwight and others, had also long been marred by a burial ground which weeping willows failed to conceal. The first settlers had followed the English custom of burying their dead in the yard immediately behind the church; but, as time passed and the town grew, this had obvious disadvantages. In 1796, therefore, Hillhouse also took the lead in establishing a new cemetery on the northwest corner of the town where there was room for expansion. This made it possible, some years later, to free the Green of what Dwight called "an improper appendage."<sup>5</sup>

Opposite the west side of this central square stood the college buildings while on the Green itself were Dr. Dana's large brick church, two others painted white, and the statehouse, New Haven being then joint capital with Hartford. One traveler thought the spires of these various structures gave the place "a city aspect," although the presence of many trees tended to preserve a rural atmosphere.<sup>6</sup> The latter was further enhanced by the fact that nearly all the buildings, stores as well as dwellings, were of wood. Brick and stone were beginning to be used, but on the whole Dwight regarded the town as so much fuel for a future conflagration. Almost none of the buildings had more than two stories or made claim to architectural distinction. Loyal as he was to the things of New England, Dwight referred hurriedly to the statehouse as "a plain, barely decent Edifice," and admitted that the



churches, too, were old and "barely decent structures." He must have rejoiced when, in 1812, all three congregations voted to erect new buildings which eventually gave the Green three churches of which New Haveners could be justly proud.<sup>7</sup>

These were glories still to come, but on the whole Dwight found the houses in New Haven "generally decent," some of the newer, "modern" ones being "handsome." They, as well as their fences and outhouses, were built in what he called a style "neat and tidy." Most were painted white, which, together with the "great multitude of shade-trees," gave the town "a delightful appearance." A "considerable proportion" had "court-yards" in front ornamented with trees and shrubs, and, in the rear, gardens filled with fruit trees, flowers, and "culinary vegetables." Except for the near-by marshes, fruitful only of malevolent squadrons of mosquitoes, Dwight described the soil of the surrounding region as not naturally rich but, with proper cultivation, capable of producing everything suitable to the climate and particularly well fitted for gardens.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the inhabitants of the township were farmers, but it is significant that in New Haven itself Dwight counted, in 1811, when the population had grown to over five thousand, these numerous and diversified occupations: <sup>9</sup>

29 houses concerned in foreign commerce	1 ship-yard
41 stores of dry goods	17 butchers
42 grocery stores	16 schools
4 ship chandlery do.	12 inns
2 wholesale hardware do.	5 tallow-chandlers
3 wholesale dry goods do.	2 brass-founders
1 wholesale glass and china do.	3 brasiers
1 furrier's do.	29 blacksmiths
10 apothecaries do.	1 bell-founder
6 traders in lumber	9 tanners
1 in paper hangings	30 shoe and boot makers
6 shoe stores	9 carriage makers
7 manufactories of hats	7 goldsmiths
5 hat stores	4 watch-makers
4 book stores	5 cabinet-makers
3 rope walks	4 harness-makers
2 sail lofts	50 carpenters and joiners
	3 comb-makers

4 Windsor-chair-makers	1 nailer
15 masons	2 paper-makers
26 tailors	5 printing offices
14 coopers	2 book-binders
3 stone-cutters	5 bakers
7 curriers	2 newspapers published
2 block-makers	6 clergymen
5 barbers	16 lawyers
3 tinner	9 practising physicians, and
1 wheelwright	1 surgeon
1 leather-dresser	

This list indicates the economic importance of the town, notwithstanding its small population. New Haven's coastal trade extended the full length of the Atlantic seaboard. Its foreign commerce was "principally" with the West Indies, "occasionally" with South America, although most of the countries of Europe, the Madeira Islands, Batavia, and even China saw ships from this enterprising little Connecticut seaport. More than one circumnavigated the globe, engaging in the seal trade, carrying sandalwood from the Sandwich Islands to Canton, and picking up cargoes wherever there seemed to be a promise of profit. For example, the *Neptune*, fitted out for a sealing voyage at an expense of \$48,000, returned proudly in 1796 from Canton with a cargo worth \$240,000. "Not far from half" of the cargoes imported by New Haven merchants was sold in New York, which was also the principal market for Connecticut products. Daily packets therefore plowed through the waters of the Sound to that city. New Haven also served as the distributing center for the interior of Connecticut, exchanging European, East and West Indian goods for cash and local produce. The main Georgia-to-Maine road branched at New Haven for Hartford and New London, so that most of the land travel on that important route passed through the town. It was also the starting point of six turnpike roads into the interior.

According to Dwight, business was conducted with "skill and spirit" but in a manner "fair and honourable." He said failures were few, and on the rare occasions when one heard of "a trick in trade," it was mentioned with surprise and indignation. Almost every man was active in business, living "at a prudent distance" within his income. Dwight also claimed that the vessels built for

New Haven merchants who engaged in foreign commerce were stronger and better than those built elsewhere. Since the captains who commanded them were men of "enterprise, skill, and probity," they were entrusted with the sale and purchase of their cargoes as well as the navigation of their ships. They frequently acquired "handsome property," and Dwight said a number of them were "distinguished by their good manners, good sense, and extensive information." After all, they were men of Puritan New England. Their character, Dwight firmly believed, was responsible for the fact that "very few vessels from this port meet with those accidents, which are fatal to others." He found further proofs of the enterprise of the inhabitants in their two banks, incorporated in 1792 and 1811 with capitalizations of \$300,000 and \$500,000 respectively; in their two insurance companies; in the formation of turn-pike roads; and in the erection of a fine bridge, at a cost of \$60,000, forming a useful link in the post road between New Haven and East Haven.

Except for a few negroes, the population was of pure English stock, far more homogeneous than today. Business, politics, and the college brought people of distinction to the town. There was no theater to corrupt the purity of the place. A tardy stagecoach consumed only a day on the thirty-five miles to Hartford, while New York was but two or three days away by stage or sailing packet. Altogether Dwight found New Haven society congenial, the surrounding country beautiful, and after a few years of residence could say: "Take it for all in all, I have never seen a place, where I would so willingly spend my life."<sup>10</sup> Here it was that he set to work to build up "a ruined college."

\* \* \*

There was much to be done. His predecessor had carried the college through the difficult years of the Revolution and the post-war period. Dwight paid him the tribute of saying, "Doctor Stiles was probably the most learned man in America, at the time of his death; and was probably excelled by few in the world."<sup>11</sup> During much of his administration Stiles had been the sole active permanent officer. Aided only by young tutors, he was compelled to perform, in addition to his duties as President, those of the two professor-



ships (Divinity and Mathematics). It was a troubled time. Only toward the end of his term did a grant of money from the state legislature, the erection of a new dormitory, and the appointment of a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy make the future begin to look brighter. But by that time Stiles' advancing years made it impossible for him to push his plans or govern the college with the energy needed. Discipline grew notoriously slack. In this field the old President labored under a further handicap. Having been trained in the days of President Clap, he clung tenaciously to the methods of the mid-eighteenth century.

Dwight, on the other hand, was in the prime of life; a man of ripe experience, yet open to new ideas and possessed in full measure of the inexhaustible vigor and determination to carry his program through successfully. He had a clear vision of the place he wanted Yale College to occupy in the life of the nation, and a definite understanding of what his own administration might accomplish toward that goal. With immediate ends, as well as the ultimate purpose, always realistically in mind, he pushed the institution steadily forward by methods flexible and practical. If one way of doing it failed, he tried others until he found one which succeeded. In Dwight the college obtained the leader it required for the time. His administration, lasting over two decades, gave Yale the impetus which began its modern growth.

The students themselves felt the change immediately. During his first year as President, mature seniors, upon whose judgment it seems safe to rely, reported independently that they had never seen the college in "so good a situation." Under Dwight, "a person so different from his predecessor," they said the "government" of the college possessed more energy and received greater respect than previously. This, they apparently agreed, was "not owing altogether to the neglect of Dr. Stiles but to his great age." One sent the news of Yale to a former classmate, saying: "We now see the advantage of having an able director at the head of affairs, one whose commands are energetic, respected, and obeyed, for if the tree is corrupt, so also will be the branches. It is surprising to see what a difference there is in the behavior of the students since last year; at present there is no card playing, at least but a little of it,

no nightly revellings, breaking tutors' windows, breaking glass bottles, etc. but all is order and quietness, more so I believe than was ever known for any length of time in this college." Another reported that during the autumn term there had been "scarcely an act committed, worthy of reprehension," and, as convincing evidence of this, he pointed out that not a single fine had been inflicted. Miracle of miracles, "the utmost order" prevailed in the commons, of all places. Still more astounding, the students attended the exercises punctually, even being "much more steady at prayers than formerly."<sup>12</sup>

The only case of serious misconduct during this year seems to have been that of a misguided youth, a great spender, who was found guilty of stealing fifty dollars from three fellow students. For this he publicly, at evening prayers, had "the honor to be expelled"; whereupon an uncle shipped him off to the West Indies to meditate upon his disgrace. By spring the "bloods" of the college were reported to "have almost all walked off." Those of the senior class who had not yet mended their ways were expected to do so before the end of the year; otherwise they faced the possibility of being deprived of their degrees, "as the pres. is determined to be very particular." On the whole the students paid much more attention to work, and not even "March Devil" appeared "within Old Yale this spring." The enforcement of a regulation prohibiting students from attending balls and dancing schools aroused no spirit of rebellion, except possibly in the hearts of the belles and the French dancing masters of the town. Dwight's new regime, indeed, influenced one student so profoundly that he broke himself of "the vulgar habit of swearing, & the still more pernicious one of gambling." Thus complete and speedy was the reformation brought about by the new President's "government"!

He was no less successful as a teacher, for his duties included the instruction of the senior class. One member of that class pronounced him "the most fitted and best qualified both for the instruction and government of this college that could be obtained." The senior year, which, he said, had previously been "of very little use, . . . except only for reading," now became the most important of the four years at college. Another senior expressed

the belief that persons "at this college derive twice the improvement in the senior year which has formerly been obtained." Still a third confided to his diary:

Our recitations are now becoming very interesting, by the useful and entertaining instruction which is communicated in them by the President. He is truly a great man, and it is very rare that so many excellent natural and acquired endowments are to be found in one person. When I hear him speak, it makes me feel like a very insignificant being, and almost prompts me to despair; but I am reencouraged when I reflect that he was once as ignorant as myself, and that learning is only to be acquired by long and assiduous application.

One day the President was out of town and Professor Meigs heard the recitation, with this result as far as the same diarist was concerned:

Although Mr. Meigs is a very sensible man, and very well calculated for the office which (as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy) he now fills, still it is very easy to make a contrast between him and the President; but I am doubtful whether the comparison is not a false one, because the President is one of those characters which we very seldom meet with in the world, and who form its greatest ornaments.

Dwight introduced new textbooks, new subjects, and new methods. On the side, he supported the Phi Beta Kappa society, and undoubtedly it was he who encouraged the formation of an undergraduate "poetical society" so that some began "already to see the muses flying about the walls of college."

In the pulpit, too, Dwight impressed the young gentlemen of Yale. Another entry in the diary quoted above recorded that the author had attended meeting "all day" in the chapel and had been "well entertained with two excellent sermons from the President." How many undergraduates today are "entertained" by presidential homilies? And another student wrote that, since the post of Professor of Divinity had not been filled, "the pulpit is at present supplied by Dr. Dwight; which you may be sure is not displeasing to the students." Few today, in their anxiety to escape to other, gayer worlds over the week end, concern themselves about who fills the chapel pulpit in their absence.

Above all Dwight impressed the students by his character, by



his "handsome and graceful person," his "sound understanding," "engaging manners," "open, candid and free behavior," and by his "inexhaustible fund of true natural eloquence." One senior decided Dwight possessed all the qualities "the heart can wish or the soul lust after." Another wrote to a former classmate who had transferred to another college, "All college are perfectly pleased with the President. . . . If you knew the advantages we enjoy under the instruction of Dr. Dwight you would regret having deserted us. . . . Dwight is just such a man as every one would wish himself to be." This was the impression he made upon the seniors whom he first instructed as President. Each succeeding class revered him in the same way.

The new leadership is also clearly evident in the minutes of the Corporation's meetings. From the first, that body seems to have taken on new life. More business, in greater variety, came before it. The academic machinery now began to hum briskly. At the first meeting over which the new President presided, held on the day after his inauguration, discreet steps were taken to keep the good will and support of the state legislature. The Prudential Committee was ordered to lay before the General Assembly an account of the money which the latter had given for the erection (in 1793-1794) of a new "college," called Union Hall, together with an invitation to inspect the building which their generosity had made possible. The communication was to include a full statement of the current financial condition of the college, with an explanation of the funds required for its support, a description of the condition of the buildings, and the sum needed for repairs. The opportunity was also used to call attention to "the necessity" for an additional professor's house, the estimated cost of which was clearly specified. The state of the library was not forgotten, and suggestions were made as to the funds needed to "replenish" it. Finally, the Committee was authorized to make "any further representations" regarding the aid "indispensably necessary to place this seminary in a situation to do honor to the State" by promoting the advancement of literature and education in the best manner.<sup>13</sup> President Dwight knew on which side Yale's bread might be buttered, and he managed relations with the legislature, always a delicate matter, as skillfully and patiently as the situation demanded.

When the Corporation met in the following July (1796), Dwight had a detailed agenda ready. Connecticut Hall, being then already half a century old, was ordered to be repaired throughout, the roof and "external parts as soon as may be." Other buildings likewise needed the attention of carpenters, and a new roof, or whatever repairs the Prudential Committee might deem necessary, was voted for the Chapel. It was also decided to furnish the desk in the latter building with "a decent cushion," and the pulpit window with Venetian blinds. During the next vacation all rooms in Union Hall were to be painted, and "substantial thumb latches" put on the doors. The Corporation authorized the purchase of a carpet, big enough to cover the stage at Commencement, which might also be used by the students on Quarter days under the direction of the President. Another vote sought to encourage the "youth of this college to excel in speaking" by offering "a premium" in books of ten, eight, and six shillings each, to the three best speakers in each of the three younger classes, who "shall speak publickly on the stage in chapel on the evening preceding Commencement." Qualified judges were to be appointed to decide the awards.

At this same meeting the Corporation also appointed a number of committees for special purposes, one to confer with the General Assembly, another to make a catalogue of the books in the library, a third to list the philosophical apparatus, and so on. The following September, as much business or more had to be done. Before long the Corporation found it necessary to hold not merely the one customary meeting on the day preceding Commencement, but three or four on as many successive days both before and after Commencement. They managed all the business, from the leasing and care of college farms to fixing the order of the Commencement procession, with a decision and efficiency indicative of capable hands at the helm. President Dwight always opened and closed their deliberations with prayer.<sup>14</sup> Thus guided, the college soon began to prosper.

When Dwight took charge, Yale was still little more than a "collegiate school." The President was the college, and its whole character depended upon his own. Besides himself, the teaching staff then included one professor and three young tutors. They did

not even pretend to go by the name "faculty" at that time.<sup>15</sup> Only two professorships had ever been established. That of Divinity had then been vacant for two years while the other, after having remained without an incumbent for thirteen years, had been filled only a few months before by the appointment of Josiah Meigs as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. The tutors were recent unmarried graduates who usually stayed no longer than two or three years and, therefore, exercised no permanent influence. The institution's funds would probably not pay the present university's expenses for a single week, and the students numbered a little over a hundred—about one-eighth of the freshman class today. The limited faculty had no trouble handling the curriculum since it was restricted to the traditional classical course, with emphasis upon the ancient languages, and there were no professional departments for advanced study.

Physical facilities were on a similar scale, consisting of four simple buildings along the west side of the Green. Two were barracklike dormitories dignified by the name of "colleges"—old Connecticut Hall which had been there since 1752, and the new Union Hall, then the pride of the yard. The chapel, first opened for services in 1763, housed the library in one upper room and the "museum" in another—with the college's entire "philosophical apparatus." The Refectory, built in 1782 and rapidly becoming dingy, was at the moment apparently an unused luxury, as President Stiles had discontinued the Commons four years before. Enclosing, if not embellishing, the narrow premises ran "a close board fence of paneled boards, painted red and relieved by cross stripes of white." A few trees provided shade, but the rows of elms familiar to later generations had not yet added beauty to the place. There were no miracles of landscaping, no vistas sweeping up to Gothic grandeur, to impress the visiting public. It was a yard, not a campus.

In fact, the remainder of the college square was filled with motley structures less imposing by far than the halls of Yale. A contemporary described them as "a grotesque group, generally of most undesirable establishments, among which were a barn, a barber's shop, several coarse taverns or boarding houses, a poor-house and house of correction, and the public jail with its prison



yard; the jail being used alike for criminals, for maniacs and debtors. Being very near the college, the moans of innocent prisoners, the curses of felons, and the shrill screams and wild laughter of the insane were sometimes mingled with the sacred songs of praise and with the voice of prayer, rising from the academic edifices.”<sup>16</sup> Gradually the farsighted President, ably aided by the college treasurer, James Hillhouse, and by discreet friends, achieved the elimination of most of these horrors which disfigured the square. He also took steps to better the grounds by setting out “proper trees” on both fronts of the college buildings “in such order as shall best conduce to convenience and beauty.”<sup>17</sup> But in that more needy era beauty was luxury, and the emphasis had to remain on utility. Such was the college when Dwight took hold.

He soon improved the physical side in more important ways. In the light of the modern university’s late determination to build a better, not a bigger Yale, it is interesting that contemporary carpenters should also have denounced Dwight’s building program as lavish ostentation. The criticism in his case need not be taken seriously, since it came from bigoted sources. One embittered foe, for example, gave himself away when he included in a general condemnation the charge that, while still at the head of his competing academy, Dwight had stooped to admitting girls solely because he hoped feminine appeal might lure masculine customers away from Yale.<sup>18</sup> Dwight had no need for such tricks. Nor did he go in for show.

For twenty years the funds of the college had been so small, it had been impossible to make necessary repairs. In October, 1795, the month following Dwight’s inauguration, the Connecticut legislature learned the true state of affairs, from its own investigators as well as from the new President. The Chapel, they found, leaked so impressively that only an entire new covering would protect the interior from New Haven’s abundant rainfall. The President’s house appeared to them to be “much decayed,” while its barn, outhouses, and fences were in “a ruinous condition.” The residence of the Professor of Divinity likewise needed repairs, and the Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy had no house at all (in fact, that gentleman was never too certain of next year’s salary). The General Assembly’s committee further reported that

Old College (that is, Connecticut Hall) was so far "gone to decay" that a great part of it was "wholly unfit for use, and unless it be immediately repaired the walls and more substantial parts will be lost." They admitted that all the buildings (except the new "College") required immediate attention, saying it would be advisable to erect new buildings instead of trying to repair the old ones, if the college had adequate funds; but that was exactly what the college lacked.

Dwight, therefore, made it clear to the legislature that Yale had to compete with serious rivals elsewhere (notably in Massachusetts). The institution, he argued, was an honor to the state; Yale men had led in winning the American Revolution; and the college was one of the chief reasons Connecticut was distinguished "throughout the civilized world for a superior state of social improvement and respectability."<sup>19</sup> The legislators obviously could not permit the decay of an institution which made such valuable contributions to the life and reputation of their state. Dwight's appeal succeeded. He was determined that Yale should not be inferior to any other seminary in the country. Buildings there simply had to be; by persevering effort, he got some of them.

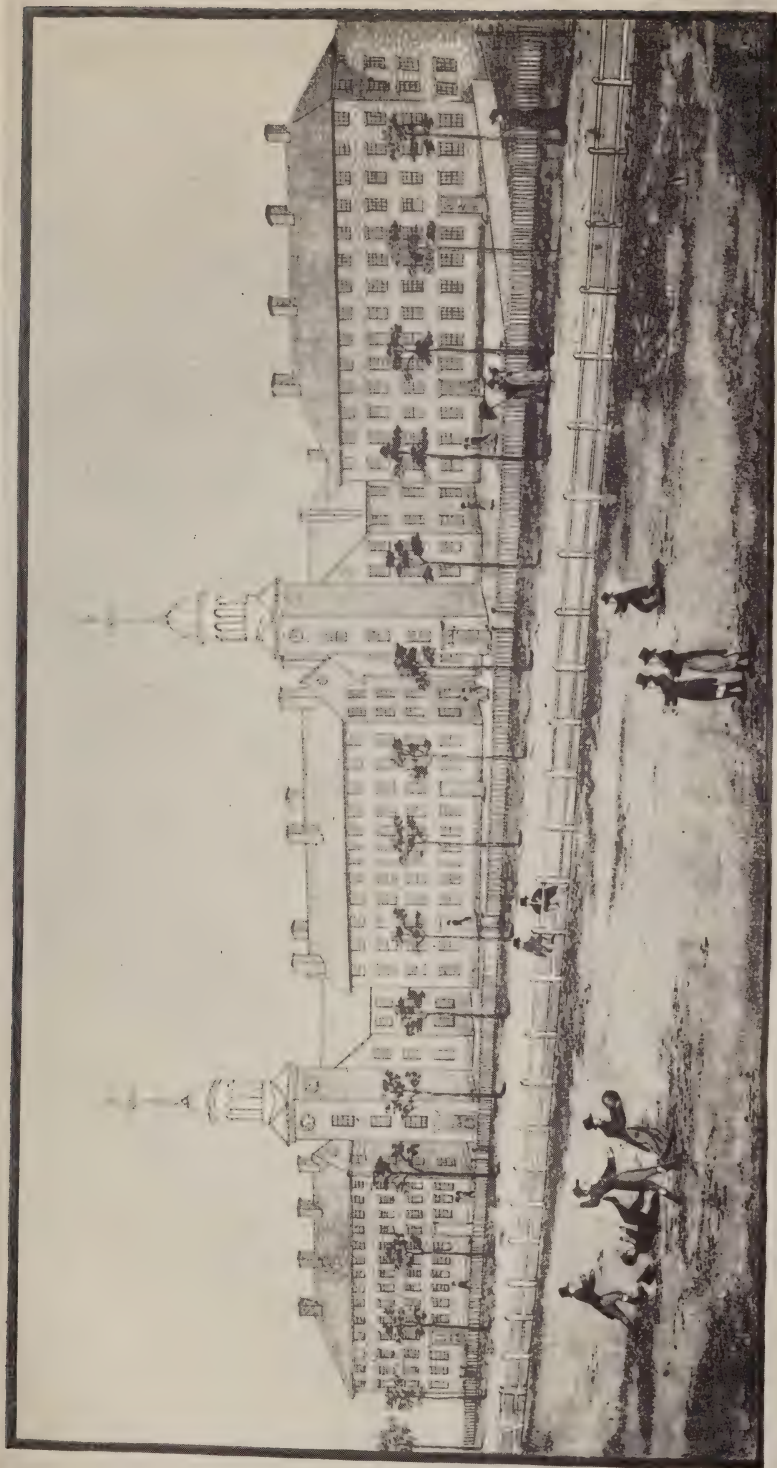
He started modestly enough. In 1797 Connecticut Hall was repaired throughout and given a fourth story. The latter addition provided it with a total of thirty-two much needed dormitory rooms, making it match Union Hall in usefulness as well as in appearance. This could hardly be called a display of vanity. By 1800 the number of students had doubled, making necessary another dormitory which was completed, with funds from the legislature, in the summer of 1803. They called it Berkeley Hall, honoring the Bishop of that name whose gifts to the college some decades earlier were still gratefully remembered. Crowded conditions also made pressing the need for lecture and class rooms, since Yale had no building specifically designed for these purposes. The third floor of the Chapel no longer sufficed for library and laboratory facilities. In November, 1800, therefore, the Corporation decided to solve all these problems at a single stroke by combining everything that was needed in one new building. This was finished in that same summer with Berkeley Hall, and, "as some name was thought necessary," it was baptized the Connecticut Lyceum, with

Aristotle presumably the godfather. It served many laudable purposes, for its walls embraced six recitation rooms for the younger classes and one for the senior; a chemical laboratory and its necessary appendages; the library; and finally, as good measure, two professorial "chambers" or "study-rooms." For years thereafter the Lyceum, it seems safe to allege, proved an invaluable acquisition. Still another improvement was achieved at the same time. Dwight had reopened the Commons, and, to accommodate the increased number of hungry students, the dining hall now had to be enlarged. They extended it thirty feet northward.<sup>20</sup> For these magnificent achievements President Dwight was called vainglorious.

Other problems, minor but nevertheless important, were solved in ways quite different from today. Lacking an infirmary of its own, the college taxed the students "one-fourth of a dollar" for the purpose of providing an "asylum" for sick students. The Corporation itself generously purchased buckets for the students to use in the emergency of fire. In 1803 it also voted appropriate compensation to one Peter Banner for the well he had built in the college yard. They had to have water. But the students themselves had to pay for whitewashing their rooms. Repairs to these were divided into two categories: those which the Corporation deemed rightfully its own, and those for which it held exuberantly destructive tenants responsible. To determine the latter a careful inspection during each spring and fall vacation decided what items should be added to the occupant's quarter bill. The Corporation handled the problem of dealing with seniors on the verge of graduation with Yankee efficiency. Their rooms were inspected and the necessary repairs made after final examinations but before degrees were granted. To achieve that final consummation of an education at Yale, all bills first had to be paid. Under Dwight's watchful eye, the college collected on all these.<sup>21</sup>

This was just as well, for, as the college grew, the legislature became less helpful. By 1812 the undergraduate body had increased so much that many students were forced to find quarters in the town. To relieve the situation, the Corporation petitioned the General Assembly for another dormitory, but without success.<sup>22</sup> However, growth brought some problems more easily solved. In 1800 the Prudential Committee ordered the construction of three





( View of the BUILDINGS ) ( NEW HAVEN )

Given by J. M. Hoppin  
June 20, 1875

Courtesy Yale University Library

Yale College in 1807, from an engraving by Amos Doolittle. Far to the right, President Dwight in spectacles and a clerical bib watches the students playing football.



structures called, with decorous modesty, "Necessary Houses." The specifications were meticulous, stipulating that each should be eight feet square, divided into four equal apartments, with doors attached and seats at just the right angle over vaults of proper depth. They were to be built "without delay at a considerable distance from each other." Only three years later three more were needed. This time the plans called for "the whole, including the roof, to be made of brick."<sup>23</sup>

It was a wise precaution, for once, on the day after Christmas, perhaps in joyful celebration of the Yuletide (there was no vacation then), misguided sophomores had "cut down" the college necessary. True, the "Authority" had acted promptly. At noon the same day they examined the entire sophomore class, two at a time, respecting their "frolic." Next day the bell called the students into chapel earlier than usual. After prayers, sentence was pronounced. All guilty participants were to pay the damage equally, and their names were read. One ringleader was dismissed from college; another was rusticated until the end of the May vacation. After these solemn announcements, the President "publicly," before the entire chapel, admonished five accessories to the crime, talking to them "very affectingly" and dwelling "considerably on the feeling of their parents." Others less guilty he admonished later in private, and the following Sunday he preached "a very affecting sermon" on misspent time.<sup>24</sup> It was after this sad experience that brick was chosen. But a few years later Dwight lamented in a letter to a friend that the peace of the college had again been similarly broken when "a small number of bad youths in the sophomore class, originally vicious, entered into a design of *blowing up* our back buildings." After one unsuccessful attempt, they managed to demolish one but were speedily detected. Two of the criminals were expelled from college after they had already fled from justice, for "they would have been sent to Newgate," a very unpleasant prison. This broke effectively that particular spell of disorder, and Dwight thought the episode would not be repeated at least "until the disaster is forgotten."<sup>25</sup>

During the first years of his administration, the President's own house presented another maintenance problem, although not because of attack by vicious sophomores bent upon crime. Located



on the west side of College Street a little south of the Chapel Street corner, it had been erected for Rector Cutler, being finished in 1722, by which time that renegade's tragic lapse into Episcopacy prevented him from occupying it. But succeeding Presidents and the tempests of the eighteenth century had used it hard. When Dwight fell heir to it, he found it in a state of "radical decay." The Prudential Committee tried to do what they could. In June, 1797, they voted to lay a stone hearth in the dining room and a new brick one, in herringbone form, in the kitchen. They went further and ordered "a decent paper" put on the dining room and the wainscoting painted. But the following October, after more thorough consideration, the Corporation "agreed unanimously" that it was inexpedient to lay out any expense for repairs "except for absolute necessity."

Instead, they decided to rid themselves of the burden and use the money from its sale to build a new, more suitable residence for the President on a recently purchased lot, in the college yard, north of the academic buildings. There they apparently imagined it would never be crowded. It was to be forty feet square, two stories high, with a kitchen thirty feet long and twenty-one wide, the whole to be finished "in a neat and plain manner, with good materials and workmanship, and with such interior form and construction" as the committee in charge judged best. They intended at first to use brick but finally made it of wood. Completed apparently in the autumn of 1799, it was built, Dwight told his friend David Humphreys, "by an Englishman, in a style of strength & neatness, superiour, in my judgement, to the usual mode of building, here." It was an appropriate dwelling, equipped even with the latest lightning rod (one inch in diameter), and no doubt the President and his lady were happy to move into it.<sup>28</sup>

All these efforts to improve the material prosperity of the college revolved around Dwight's own incessant activity. In the first year of his incumbency, because of his foresight, the college had acquired the land needed for the new buildings. And, in the best manner of a modern college executive, he tried continually to enlarge the institution's funds by private solicitation and public endeavor.

His greatest success was with the legislature. In 1792, after skillful maneuvering by Hillhouse and Stiles, a momentous bargain had been made. On its part, the General Assembly had granted the college half of the arrearages of certain taxes, long due the state in its paper currency. In return, the college admitted the governor, lieutenant governor, and six senior councilors as members of the Corporation, the clerical side of the board retaining the power to fill its own vacancies. According to Dwight, the consequences of this arrangement were happy because there had been "jealousy" in the minds of many "respectable inhabitants concerning the College; arising from the fact that it was wholly in the hands of clergymen." This unfortunate "spirit of alienation" had made it more difficult to secure public support. The concession of 1792, giving lay officers of the state a voice in the control of the college, helped to allay the feeling. The legislature became more willing to hear the institution's pleas for aid, and the college gained continuous benefit from the wisdom of able counselors.<sup>27</sup>

In 1795, when Dwight assumed the Presidency, the financial aspects of the agreement were still being worked out, and the college had received only part of the aid due to it. By that time it was obvious that the proceeds would come nowhere near the amount required to meet the real needs of the college. Consequently, when the legislature met in May, 1796, the Corporation submitted a petition asking that body to relinquish the fifty per cent which the original grant had reserved to the state. This, of course, represented a serious modification in the bargain of 1792. Treasurer Hillhouse used his powerful influence to prepare the ground, but it was President Dwight who appeared before the Assembly and won the day by his eloquence, "convincing, exciting, and carrying along the legislature, to the important consummation, that laid the basis for our subsequent prosperity."<sup>28</sup> Before granting the petition, the canny legislature laid down one condition, that the college pay the state the very definite sum of \$13,726.39. No matter, in the end the college reaped about forty thousand dollars from the deal, an insignificant sum as Yale's finances are figured in the 1940's but colossal in the 1790's. Indeed, many citizens who had not heard the President's persuasive appeal

thought the legislature had been entirely too generous. Some members paid the penalty politically. Later, on more than one occasion when Dwight released the power of his oratory in the same cause, the legislature, having learned its lesson, admitted he presented the case convincingly but took no action. Thereby, the college escaped legislative control, which was some consolation. The surprising thing is that Dwight accomplished so much with so little. This was about all the endowment with which he had to work.<sup>29</sup>

As he once said, it was inevitable that from its foundation the infant "seminary" should have a struggle "before it could arrive at a tolerable degree of maturity in a country where a thin population, poverty, repeated wars, and heavy taxes, presented numerous obstacles to its growth, even among a people holding learning and science in the highest estimation." Dwight bemoaned the fact that, except from the Connecticut legislature, Yale had never received any substantial "benefaction"; whereas opulent gentlemen in Great Britain and America had bestowed "munificent donations" upon Harvard. He was particularly disturbed over the £2,000 sterling which the Honorable Edward Hopkins, once governor of Connecticut, had "plainly intended" for Yale, but which fell "through a series of accidents" partly to her sister seminary and partly to three grammar schools. Wealthy men had never been numerous in Connecticut, and whatever had been given to the college had come from men of moderate fortunes. Among these, outstanding examples were the Reverend Dr. Lockwood of Andover, who gave \$1,455.67 to increase the library and the philosophical apparatus; the Reverend Dr. Salter of Mansfield, whose \$1,566.67 was to furnish the students with instruction in the Hebrew language; the Reverend Dr. Lathrop who gave \$1,666.67; and the Honorable Oliver Wolcott who, disregarding these precedents, sent an even \$2,000 for the library fund.<sup>30</sup> These were the big gifts (except for the last, all were made before Dwight's administration), and about all there were. The day was yet to come when millionaires would compete in the furious game of leaving a lifetime's profits to Mother Yale.

This, of course, was no fault of Dwight's. He based his appeal on convincing arguments, pointing out that more than two hundred students annually received benefits from these modest sums,



for the real value of which millions would be a cheap price. In his opinion, there was not a legislature, a court, a congregation, a town meeting, a fireside, which, however insensible of the fact, did not share in these benefits. From the fountain of Yale flowed, circuitously perhaps but really and ultimately, the laws of the state, the rules which form a happy society, the doctrines and precepts inculcated by the churches. Therefore, he who became the benefactor of such an institution, became the benefactor of his country and of the later generations which would inhabit it. Dwight had no doubts about the importance of education in a young democracy.<sup>31</sup>

He practiced what he preached, contributing liberally himself from his own limited funds. Entitled to the salaries of the two offices he held, the Presidency and the Professorship of Divinity, he regularly relinquished from one-half to two-thirds of what he would have received from the latter. In time this amounted to over ten thousand dollars. He also declined an increase in salary as President, although it was offered to him during the last thirteen years of his administration.<sup>32</sup> His salary was one thousand dollars, with the usual perquisites.<sup>33</sup> Though this was twice what he had received at Greenfield Hill, it hardly permitted large philanthropies. In 1798 he wrote to his eldest son:

You wonder, my child, that I should be put to so much difficulty about money. One part of the difficulty consists in the greatness of my expenses. I pay about 350 dollars for the hire of two servants in my kitchen & including their board. My two oldest sons cost me 150 dollars for their clothing & a few extras. My own clothing costs 100 dollars more. John's bills are considerable ones. I victual 8 persons beside & clothe all that have not been mentioned before. I have more company than most people, & I journey thrice a year. The expense of living is double to what existed during the first 8 years in which I lived at Greenfield, altho' I do not live so well. . . . Beside this, during the present year I have been badly paid. This fact has greatly increased the difficulty.<sup>34</sup>

He managed his own pocketbook with typical New England thrift, and saw no reason for not applying the same principles to the finances of the college. Devoted to its welfare, he increased the funds, more than doubled the size of the library, purchased

scientific equipment, and, most important of all, added new departments of instruction.

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The latter was the project dearest to his heart. President Stiles, too, had dreamed of expanding the college into a university. In 1777, his first year in office, at the desire of the Corporation, Stiles had drafted a "Plan of an University, particularly describing the Law and Medical Lectures."<sup>35</sup> This was for the benefit of a committee which the General Assembly had appointed to consider the founding of two additional professorships. The War for Independence then blocked the scheme, and, although in 1783 the college authorities returned to it, the troubled times made it impossible to raise the necessary funds. In fact, Stiles had difficulty finding the means to keep the college buildings in repair. By 1795, when Dwight took office, the country was increasing in strength and prosperity, and conditions in general were more favorable. Nevertheless, under a lesser man the college would not have forged ahead in the way it did. An informed contemporary said, "The talents and efforts of Dr. Dwight were necessary to give these causes their full effect."<sup>36</sup>

The major need was money. The agreement of 1796 with the legislature did not provide enough to transform Yale into the university he wanted it to become; but Dwight contrived to make a definitely good beginning. Once started, the movement steadily gained momentum, and throughout the nineteenth century Yale continued to develop along the lines he pointed out in the first decade. By building up a faculty of young but unusually able colleagues, bound to him and to each other by the closest ties of friendship, common ideals, and loyalty to the college, Dwight assured the continuation of his policies long after he should be removed from the scene. The full harvest of his efforts was not reaped within his own lifetime, but he deserves credit for planting the seed.

The college's finances being what they were and the needs of its physical plant immediately pressing, intellectual expansion had to come slowly. Because of the unstable resources, Josiah Meigs had to be satisfied to hold his chair on the uncertain basis of annual

appointments. As the Corporation was struggling vainly to persuade a suitable person to accept the vacant Professorship of Divinity, Dwight had to perform the duties of that office himself. Under these circumstances the establishment of additional departments must have seemed visionary indeed. But soon after moving to New Haven Dwight set to work on his plan. He thought one step might be accomplished without much delay. That was the establishment of a medical school. Harvard, Columbia, and Pennsylvania each had one. Why not Yale? There was no doubt of the local need for a good medical school since most candidates for the profession in Connecticut obtained their training by the old method of apprenticeship under a physician. Dwight discussed the project with leading physicians, but it was years before he overcame the opposition of certain members of the state medical society. He also wanted a school of theology and one of law; but even greater obstacles stood in the way of these, and from the beginning Dwight had less hope of securing them. However, it did no harm to try. He discussed ways and means with appropriate people. There was plenty of good will, but no money. The legislature refused aid, and none was forthcoming from individuals. Dwight did not despair.<sup>37</sup>

His first reward came in 1801, when the Corporation voted that "a Professorship of Law be instituted in this University." Their use of the word "university" at this time is interesting. While that was the goal at which Dwight was aiming, he himself was unwilling to assume the name until he had achieved the reality.<sup>38</sup> Yale, in fact, did not officially call itself a university until after the inauguration in 1886 of Dwight's grandson, the second President Timothy Dwight, and in the following year the legislature authorized its legal use. In 1801 it was merely wishful thinking. The new professorship brought the college no nearer that exalted state, for it was not intended to serve the purpose of a law school but was only an enlargement of the undergraduate curriculum.

The Corporation specified that "it shall be the Duty of the Professor to read Lectures in the Chapel for the benefit of all the Graduate and Undergraduate students belonging to the college on the leading principles of the Law of Nations, on the general principles of Civil Government, particularly of Republican representa-



tive government, on the Constitution of the United States and of this State, on the Municipal Law of the United States and of this State, and also on the various obligations and duties resulting from social relations especially those relations which arise from our own National and State governments—so methodized as to present the subject in a connected view and so condensed as will in the best manner serve to form good men and good citizens, the said Lectures to be read monthly or oftener, so as to conclude the course of Lectures in the Term of four years.” Having assigned these simple responsibilities, the Corporation decided the position deserved a salary of only two hundred dollars per annum, and gave the appointment to a distinguished citizen of New Haven, the Honorable Elizur Goodrich, who was experienced in state and national politics as well as at the bar.<sup>39</sup> No doubt they had him in mind when the position was created, for it was distinctly a part-time proposition.

Three years later it was arranged that the Professor of Law should “include his system” in thirty-six lectures spread over two years, delivering one approximately every fortnight during term time. The students were required to take notes and were examined at each session on their knowledge of the preceding lecture.<sup>40</sup> It seems to have been an attempt to satisfy the need for some such instruction as departments of History and Political Science now provide. In Dwight’s opinion, if the youth of the country could be trained to be good men, they would automatically become good citizens, an objective of prime importance for the young republic. Since Jefferson had then recently taken over the national government, Dwight and his fellow Federalists who kept a firm grip upon Yale may have felt it all the more urgent to guide the younger generation to “correct principles.” For that task Goodrich was particularly well qualified. He had just become one of the prominent victims of the Jeffersonian spoils system, having been peremptorily replaced as Collector of the Port of New Haven by the aged father of Abraham Bishop—that Abraham whose campaign oratory had been such bitter gall and wormwood to Connecticut Federalists. The latter regarded the Goodrich case as a matter of principle. Mr. Goodrich did not suffer from lack of opportunities. The

state legislature, the county bench, the city of New Haven, all made good use of his superior abilities for many years to come. But that is another story.<sup>41</sup>

In any case, the new chair of Law, though occupied by such an eminent incumbent, was not the equivalent of a law school. Dwight probably hoped it might be a step in that direction in spite of the serious competition facing such a project. The famous school at Litchfield was then flourishing, while in New Haven itself both Judge Charles Chauncey (an intimate friend of Dwight's) and Mr. Seth P. Staples were gaining reputations for the skill with which they prepared young men for legal careers. Dwight may have thought the Professor of Law might build a similar private law school on his own until funds for a full department could be found. But as legislator, judge, and mayor of New Haven, Mr. Goodrich found his public duties so pressing that after nine years in the professorship he resigned in 1810. The post remained vacant throughout Dwight's administration, and was not filled until 1826, when a law school as a part of Yale really began with Daggett's appointment. Dwight at least had foreseen that day and had done what he could to bring it nearer.<sup>42</sup>

With other items on his program he gained more substantial victories. In 1802 he persuaded the Corporation to establish a Professorship of Languages and Ecclesiastical History, and another of Chemistry. The former was at first admittedly a makeshift arrangement. Languages meant Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. Ecclesiastical History was added to the title chiefly for propaganda purposes. Because of his own intense interest in that subject, Stiles had voluntarily delivered regular lectures on it. After his death the college wished to continue this valuable instruction. Obviously the incumbent of this new professorship could not teach properly everything his title intimated, not even all the languages. But the problem could, at least, thus be kept in view until his duties might be divided among other professors as means for their support could be obtained. In fact, the first incumbent himself was "to enter upon his office as soon as actual provision shall be made for his support," and the Corporation instructed a committee headed by Dwight to solicit the General Assembly's aid.

On this optimistically uncertain basis, but with President Dwight's confident backing, Mr. Ebenezer Grant Marsh accepted the appointment. A Yale graduate of 1795, he had distinguished himself in the study of Hebrew under Stiles, whose mastery of Oriental languages—Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and Armenian—aroused the admiration even of learned rabbis. Marsh had shown such promise that he had been elected instructor in Hebrew in 1798 and tutor in 1799. With a brilliant career clearly ahead of him, he died in the fall of 1803, before he could enter upon the professorship. Dwight and the college felt the loss keenly. Two years later, on September 10, 1805, the Corporation chose James L. Kingsley, then Senior Tutor, for the place.

Even then the problem of support had not yet been solved. Mr. Kingsley assumed the professorial dignity with the understanding that he was also to continue in the business of tutor. This blessed him with miscellaneous duties and capacities as instructor of Hebrew, tutor of one division of the junior class, and Librarian. He was paid accordingly, his "support" apparently being made up in devious ways—£100 for functioning as tutor, £36 for Hebrew instruction, something for keeping the Library, £50 taken from the salary of the Professor of Divinity (which position Dwight now assumed permanently at a reduced stipend) until a total of about £200 was achieved. This fell short of the regular salary (\$670) paid to others of professorial rank, and one strong-minded member of the Corporation created consternation among the young professors by announcing his opposition to giving them houses. One potential victim of this injustice lamented: "It seems, then, we have calculated too much upon the premium matrimonial. We must learn a little of Mr. Jefferson's republican economy, to support families upon six hundred and seventy dollars a year." But, being quite familiar with the tribulations which accompany small salaries, Dwight proved sympathetic and gradually eased the difficulty. In 1806 the professors were given \$150 in lieu of house rent, and in 1810 they had further reason to rejoice when their salaries were raised to \$1,000. Kingsley continued his tutorial duties until 1812, but thereafter he was gradually relieved of his multitudinous burdens as other professorships were created,



permitting greater specialization. The latter was a goal at which Dwight aimed steadily.<sup>43</sup>

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The establishment of a professorship of chemistry was an even greater triumph for his program. This project had been in Dwight's mind from the beginning, but again it took time to find the necessary money. With his usual confidence in the future, he persuaded the Corporation to vote in 1798 that "a Professorship of Chymistry and Natural History be instituted in this College, as soon as the funds shall be sufficiently productive to support it."<sup>44</sup> To Dwight this was no idle resolution hopefully prophetic of attainment at some distant date. Four years later he saw that the thing was done.

Most startling was the fact that he then proceeded to induce the Corporation to choose for the post a young man who had had no training in the subject he was to teach and consequently was blessed with the distinction of being totally ignorant of it. Herein Dwight displayed conspicuously the vision and wisdom with which he managed all college affairs. He was not glued to precedent. The new professor's knowledge of chemistry was, after all, a secondary consideration. The man was the important thing, and Dwight selected Benjamin Silliman.

At first the event surprised and bewildered that young gentleman as much as it did every one else. In Greenfield, Dwight had been a close friend of Silliman's father, who lived only three miles away. After the latter's death Dwight took a warm interest in the boy, especially at Yale. Young Silliman was a senior there during Dwight's first year as President, and a member of the first class (that of 1796) taught by the new President. He soon looked upon Dwight as a model to be followed and was deeply influenced by his inspiring instruction.<sup>45</sup>

This did not include chemistry. Dwight had never studied that subject himself, but, being interested in all knowledge, he appreciated its coming importance at a time when chemistry was in its infancy. In this country, indeed, it was scarcely in the embryonic stage. At Yale the very name was hardly known, certainly so far as the students were concerned. When Professor Meigs lectured from the chapel pulpit on "Natural Philosophy," he did occasionally men-

tion things chemical, for he had read the works of such French writers as Chaptal and Lavoisier. But whatever chemistry crept into his discourses was rather by way of interesting digression, and he never performed experiments. Nevertheless, it astonished Silliman, then an undergraduate of sixteen, to hear the learned professor announce that ordinary water contains heat which makes the water no hotter to the touch or to the thermometer; that this heat comes out of the water when it freezes, and still the freezing water is not warmed by the escaping heat, except when the water has been cooled below the freezing point before freezing; then, when it actually freezes, the temperature rises to  $32^{\circ}$ . On top of this, the information that boiling water cannot be made hotter was all the more perplexing. Mysterious revelations of this kind aroused young Silliman's curiosity, but Meigs kindled his interest only temporarily.

It was Dwight who led him into chemistry seriously. Two years after graduating, Silliman returned to New Haven to study law, first in the office of Simeon Baldwin and then under Charles Chauncey. During the winter of 1800-1801 he acted as tutor at Yale, earning an income thereby and continuing his legal preparation at the same time. While thus occupied, he began to face the problem of where and how to begin his professional career. Friends in the South urged him to come to Georgia where, they thought, the practice of law would be more lucrative than in the North. One warm July morning, in the summer of 1801, he met Dwight under the shade of the elms in front of the college buildings. After the usual amenities, he asked the older man's opinion of the opportunities in Georgia. The President, with his usual decision, promptly advised him not to go to a region where slavery existed and where the climate was so unfavorable that he might die of fever within two years. There was also a weightier reason.

The time had arrived, Dwight informed his young tutor, when the Corporation could carry into effect the resolution of 1798 to establish a professorship of chemistry. But, he said, it was impossible to find "among us" a man properly qualified. They could probably import a foreigner skilled in the science, but a stranger from abroad would be unfamiliar with the American college system and with American students; and there was danger that his "peculiar" habits and prejudices would make him an uncongenial colleague.

To Dwight faculty harmony was essential. He had just been through an experience which demonstrated the importance of this, although he probably did not mention it to Silliman. Professor Meigs was well qualified for his position but expressed himself bluntly in sympathy with the French Revolution at a period when that movement caused only revulsion in Dwight's Federalist heart. Influential friends of the college felt as Dwight did. Oil and water do not mix. That very year, in 1801, Professor Meigs departed from New Haven to assume the presidency of the University of Georgia, apparently quite willing to risk the dangers of that climate rather than remain in the oppressive atmosphere of Yale.<sup>46</sup> The Corporation gladly filled his place by appointing Jeremiah Day, a young Yale graduate of whom all were certain.

Dwight wished no repetition of this episode. The new Professor of Chemistry had to be one who had been born and trained in the best tradition of Yale and New England, a person whose habits and sympathies were known to be correct. Dwight, therefore, preferred to appoint a young man in whom he had complete confidence, and give him the time and financial aid necessary to acquire the proper scientific training. Silliman was his former pupil, the son of an old friend. There was no doubt about his ability. Of course the approval of the trustees would have to be secured; so, there in the shade of the elms, Dwight asked Silliman for permission to present his name to the Corporation, promising him cordial presidential support.

The compliment took Silliman completely by surprise. Then twenty-two years of age, he was nearly ready for the bar. Dwight's offer meant preparing himself anew for a different profession, one for which, in Connecticut, there were no precedents. Seeing his confusion, Dwight presented the arguments in favor of the step. For one thing, he said, Silliman could not adopt a life which would be more useful or more promising of reputation. The legal profession was crowded with shining lights, and success in it would be slow, though possibly more lucrative. Chemistry, on the other hand, was a totally new field in which there were no rivals. Silliman would be alone, if not lonely, in it. Its very novelty would fascinate both him and his pupils. He could interest the public at large as well as the college in it. Indeed, from the point of view of the physical



sciences (geology, mineralogy, etc.) the country was rich in unexplored treasures; by aiding in their development he would perform an important public service which would connect his name with the rising reputation of the new republic in which he lived. This was a patriotic and personal motive which Dwight knew how to present effectively because he believed in it. In fact, the prophecy was amply fulfilled in Silliman's later career. Dwight further encouraged his young friend by promising him time for adequate preparation, and assuring him that after beginning his duties he would have no difficulty keeping ahead of his audience because he would always advance in his knowledge of the field more rapidly than they. The interview ended, and with these things to think over, Silliman retired to his chamber for meditation.

He decided to do it. A lawyer's career would be full of temptations to use one's talents to pervert truth, to conceal or palliate wrong. One might not always be on the side of a good cause, and Silliman had already seen enough of courtrooms to know that they were inhabited by the most undesirable elements in society. The prospect of having to deal with the weak and wicked did not please him, whereas the study of nature offered no such disadvantages. In nature there were no falsehoods, only mysteries to unveil. That in itself would be an exciting achievement. There would be no polluting influences; all the associations would be "elevated and virtuous," pointing toward the infinite Creator. This was the direction in which Silliman's taste led him. He had health, youth, zeal, and perseverance. Why should he despair of success? He and Dwight agreed to keep the business quiet until matters could be arranged for final action by the Corporation. Meanwhile, for another year Silliman continued as tutor. To be safe, he also finished his law studies and became a member of the Connecticut Bar. This proved to be an unnecessary precaution. On September 7, 1802, the Corporation definitely established a chair of "Chemistry and Natural History," naming Benjamin Silliman to it. Dwight knew how to get things done.<sup>47</sup>

The appointment was "a cause of wonder to all, and of cavil to political enemies of the College." In that early era standards were not so strict as now, and a Ph.D. diploma had yet to become the passport prerequisite for entering sacred academic precincts. But a

command of one's subject did seem desirable, and this appointee lacked even that. No matter, President Dwight took care of those who needed to be satisfied, while Professor Silliman began reading books on chemistry. Parts of some he found intelligible, but on the whole they only convinced him he must work in a laboratory where he could see and perform experiments, and discover what the substances were really like. Philadelphia offered the best opportunity for such experience, and, with Dwight's approval, to Philadelphia he went.

There, during the winter following his appointment, he passed five busy but pleasant months. It was not all work, for he found himself in a group of agreeable companions, mostly old friends from Yale, who, like himself, were starting notable careers. They were brilliant young men, lively conversationalists, and there was not a teetotaler among them! Gentlemen all, each furnished himself with a decanter to which was attached a metallic label bearing the owner's name, according to the custom in fashionable boarding houses. They drank healths, especially when stranger guests were present, and a glass or two was not considered excessive, sometimes two or three "according to circumstances." The presiding hostess, a "high-spirited and efficient woman," provided an ample, even luxurious table, far more elaborate than the simple diet to which Silliman had been accustomed in New Haven. He lived so well that by the end of his stay he had made "some progress towards incipient gout." Vigorous exercise counteracted this menace, for he walked frequently, before breakfast, in all kinds of weather, to the Schuylkill River and back, a distance of two and one-half miles each way. His friend, Robert Hare, had a brewery one and one-half miles uptown where porter of an excellent quality was to be had. That, too, "often gave the occasion of useful exercise." Regular attendance at the Reverend Ashbel Green's church offset these worldly influences, and of course Silliman had many things to accomplish.

He wasted no time. Lectures on chemistry by Dr. James Woodhouse, part of the course in the Medical School, gave him his first real introduction to the field. Woodhouse performed experiments "imperfectly," his apparatus was "humble," and the instruction not of the best. But it was all new to Silliman, who absorbed every scrap of information available and soon began to interpret chemical

phenomena for himself. Thus he acquired a foundation upon which to build. And he made up for its deficiencies by association with his fellow boarder Robert Hare, the brewer, who was also proficient in chemistry so far as it had then developed. The two became fast friends, and persuaded their gracious landlady to allow them the use of a spare cellar-kitchen for a laboratory where they worked together whenever time permitted. In addition Silliman read what books he could secure, profiting especially from the lectures of the distinguished Dr. Black of Edinburgh and from Thomson's *Chemistry* in four volumes, the first edition of which had just come out.

He increased his knowledge of natural history through a private course of lectures given in the evening by the learned Dr. Barton, Professor of Materia Medica and Botany. However, when Dr. Barton suggested taking the class on Sunday to see the splendid specimens of animal, bird, and reptile life in Peale's Museum, Silliman's New England conscience led him to speak firmly in favor of observing the Sabbath, and they went on Saturday instead. Dwight's confidence in this young man was not misplaced. As if he did not have enough to do, the President requested him, if possible, to pay "some attention to the analyzing of stones," as the head of Yale wished to know whether any of the formations around New Haven resembled the basalts of the Giant's Causeway.<sup>48</sup> Since Dwight was also then making strenuous efforts to establish a medical school to which the Professor of Chemistry would naturally be attached, Silliman attended lectures on anatomy and surgery by Dr. Caspar Wistar. These he found particularly valuable, while Dr. Wistar's invitation to dine with the celebrated Dr. Joseph Priestley was a high spot in his Philadelphia experience. He had no difficulty penetrating the best social circles, and altogether his brief five months proved full and stimulating.

In March, 1803, the necessity of resuming tutorial responsibilities compelled him to interrupt his studies. The college needed its few teachers. But, back in New Haven, Silliman found time to perform some experiments and construct apparatus for future use. The next fall he was better prepared to profit from another winter in Philadelphia. This resembled his first, and each time he traveled across New Jersey he used the opportunity to visit the Professor of Chemistry at Princeton, Dr. John Maclean, who told him about



books, showed him his library and apparatus, and gave him much valuable advice. Finally, he was ready. On April 4, 1804, in a public room hired for college purposes, in Mr. Tuttle's building on Chapel Street, Silliman, aged twenty-five, delivered his first lecture. He explained the new science to the seniors, among whom was John C. Calhoun, until their examinations in July. Once started, he continued the process with increasing enthusiasm for fifty-one years. Dwight's selection of Silliman was a happy choice for Yale and for American chemistry.

For some time things remained on a primitive basis. Silliman found that his regular laboratory-lecture room was located in the new Lyceum building—but, alas, in the very bottom of that monument to erudition. The English architect, able in matters with which he was familiar, had only the vaguest impression of what chemistry implied. Apparently confusing it with the black arts of alchemy, if not necromancy, he placed the laboratory well underground, and adorned it with an elaborate groined arch of boards rising from six massive stone pillars and covering the entire room. This ingenious device effectively cut off what little light reached the windows and produced the appropriately gloomy atmosphere of a witch's cavern. In this black pit, down deep enough to make the Great Sorcerer himself a near neighbor, Silliman was to place his crucibles and blowpipes, and practice his mysterious magic.

Amateur though he was, he saw that it would never do. He discreetly invited the Corporation to visit the place. Entrance had to be achieved by means of a ladder through a hole, or scuttle, in the roof of the arch. With all their accumulated dignity, President Dwight, the Reverend Dr. Ely, the Honorable James Hillhouse, and the other grave gentlemen descended and saw for themselves, for enough light trickled in "to make the darkness visible." Though it meant the waste of many precious dollars, they agreed to permit the removal of the entire arch and the stone pillars, and ordered the excavation of a trench on the outside that the cheerful rays of the western sun might enter. Whitewashing the walls and ceiling, constant cleaning of the windows, white beach sand on the flagstone floor, light gray paint on the rows of seats, which were on an incline raised gradually from front to rear so that all might see, a gallery erected on the side opposite the windows, and other desper-

ate measures put things in decent order. Still, when standing on the floor, the lecturer's head remained six feet below the surface of the ground, and the place was "very damp." Iron articles rusted promptly, and preparations which attracted water readily found their affinity, frequently deliquescing. There was nothing to do but make the best of it, and in this subterranean chamber Silliman spent fifteen of the best years of his life (from the age of twenty-five to forty), eagerly pioneering in a new science.

In the beginning his equipment was no better than his laboratory. The "Philosophical Apparatus" inherited from his own undergraduate days helped not at all. It consisted of "an air-pump, a whirling table, a telescope or two, an electrical machine, a quadrant, a theodolite, the mechanical powers, a spouting fountain, and a few miscellaneous articles."<sup>49</sup> Once these had been sufficient to procure some reputation for the college, especially in pneumatics, mechanics, and electricity. But the air-pump was such a feeble engine of destruction that its exhaustion seldom proved fatal to the mice it attempted to sacrifice in the cause of science. The apparatus was "somewhat extended and embellished" when Silliman found in a closet of the old Philosophical chamber a few gas bottles and tubes and other chemical instruments which Ebenezer Fitch had brought back from England several years previously. These had never been used.

Silliman bought some retorts in Philadelphia but found it difficult to procure glass instruments in this country. When he ordered more retorts from a glassmaker in East Hartford, that worthy confessed he had never seen one but promised to make an exact replica if Silliman would give him a pattern to follow. Silliman made the mistake of sending a retort, the neck of which had been broken off cleanly near the ball. Both parts fitted perfectly, and Silliman saw no reason why it would not serve the purpose. In due time he received the reproduction, faithfully copied even to the fracture. In each box, carefully wrapped, broken neck and ball "lay in state like decapitated kings in their coffins." Silliman took refuge in the suggestion of Dr. Priestley that with Florence flasks, plenty of glass tubes, vials, bottles and corks, old gun barrels, and a few live coals he might make a variety of apparatus himself. With the aid of an old blacksmith's furnace which he had lugged from

Philadelphia, Silliman set to work. The experienced Priestley had also recommended sand and bran to supplement soap for cleaning the hands, but Silliman found coarse Indian meal better. Consoling himself with the thought that there was no sin in scientific dirt, he managed to fit up an array of paraphernalia sufficiently impressive for his first audiences.<sup>50</sup> In struggling with these sundry problems he was sustained by the always cheering encouragement of President Dwight, who took an intense interest in it all.

Opportunity for still better things soon came. In September, 1804, the Corporation authorized the expenditure of nine thousand dollars to "replenish" the library and purchase philosophical and chemical apparatus.<sup>51</sup> When Silliman heard this glorious news, he was ill with dysentery; but it could hardly have retarded his recovery. In any case, it gave him a brilliant idea; and as soon as he was able to leave his bed he hurried to Dr. Dwight. Finding that loyal supporter in the presidential front parlor and in a propitious mood, Silliman first made certain that the Corporation had actually passed the vote, and then inquired how the business was to be transacted. Dwight replied, it would probably be done through the firm of Isaac Beers & Howe, the college booksellers, via their correspondents in London, at the cost of a commission perhaps of five per cent. Silliman countered by proposing that the college send him to London to handle the purchases directly, allowing him the bookseller's percentage, his salary and six or eight months to study abroad. This would give him an opportunity for professional improvement which could not be had at home. True to character, Dwight replied "instantly" that it would be the best possible arrangement, and he would give it his strongest support.

It would not be necessary, he said, to call a special meeting of the Corporation for their approval of the plan because the Prudential Committee (a small executive group authorized to function between meetings of the board) could do it. Dwight instructed Silliman to submit the matter to them at once, as the members were within easy reach. The Reverend James Dana was at hand in New Haven, the Reverend David Ely lived only fourteen miles away at Repton, while he would find Governor Treadwell at Farmington, twenty-eight miles to the north. Obeying joyfully the President's suggestion to "step into a carriage" without delay, Silliman made



the rounds, and found these three wise gentlemen quite willing to adopt his scheme. Later they allowed him double the time for which he had asked.<sup>52</sup>

That winter he was busier than ever. With the stimulus of this fresh incentive, he put still greater effort into his chemical lectures—four a week, together with “some notices” of mineralogy. At the same time he pushed his preparations for Europe. In January he and Dwight spent a week together in New York, obtaining letters of introduction from such notables as William Woolsey, Moses Rogers, Oliver Wolcott, and Rufus King, to persons in England, Scotland, Holland, and France. Mr. King, who had been Minister to England, gave them two hours one morning, that Silliman might have the benefit of his familiarity with that country. Colonel John Trumbull, the painter, also gave him letters and became a friendly patron, furnishing him with written directions as to how to live and travel to the best advantage. Trumbull, too, had studied in England, and knew the island. Silliman welcomed his instructions because they promised to enable him to “make a respectable appearance with the least possible expense.” Every day in New York he and Dwight breakfasted and dined with important personages. The President’s connections proved invaluable.<sup>53</sup>

A few weeks later all was ready. By the middle of March (1805), Silliman finished his course in chemistry—having completed sixty or more lectures as he had planned. Thereupon, he paid his bills, said solemn farewells to his relatives, lest he never see them again, and on March 22 departed from New Haven in search of a ship bound for Liverpool.

He found the ship and, being a person who knew how, made the most of his opportunities abroad. Those fourteen months provided the experience of a lifetime, stimulating and exciting, and as profitable to the college as to himself. Both reaped permanent dividends from the investment. In London he bought books and equipment with the wisdom of a Yankee, and saw that the college got its money’s worth. Everywhere he was received cordially and had no difficulty establishing friendships which did him the most good, professionally and otherwise. During his first summer (1805) in England, the whole country was on tiptoe looking toward France, waiting impatiently for Bonaparte’s threatened invasion as well as

for news of Lord Nelson's interview with the enemy fleets. Despite the alarms of war, Silliman managed to see "a considerable number of the distinguished literati, politicians, and philosophers" of the country. He heard Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan in the House of Commons; conversed with Sir Joseph Banks, Sir Charles Blagden, Dr. Tooke, Major Rennel, and Mr. Watt; was "in company" with Cavendish, Wollaston, and Lord Macartney; attended a meeting of the Royal Society; and obtained a view of the entire Royal family. All of which served to make his estimation of his own country rise by comparison. He admitted, "We are in the rear, but not so far as I had imagined." <sup>54</sup>

In addition to intelligence and a pleasing personality, he had the advantage of being something of an oddity in England, where the natives stared at him with unabashed curiosity. An American professor was a creature not then commonly encountered in the old country, for it was some decades before the annual invasions commenced. They treated this early specimen all the more kindly. A single visit to Cambridge convinced Silliman that University gentlemen in England were "rather more convivial" than those in American colleges. The Cambridge variety pushed "the bottle briskly," and a party of masters and professors even urged him "to take a rubber at whist." <sup>55</sup> If morals were easier, the standard of learning, in the physical sciences, was higher. Silliman soon realized that, even in Philadelphia, chemistry was a very humble affair.

At the University of Edinburgh, especially, he found inspiring leaders in the field. Under their guidance he advanced his knowledge of chemistry and the related sciences. Again, anticipating duties in the Yale Medical School, if and when Dwight made that dream come true, he took courses in medicine. He enjoyed particularly one under Dr. John Barclay, a private lecturer with a broad Scotch dialect, who made comparative anatomy lively by bringing in, for illustration, monkeys, carnivora, amphibia, rodentia, pachydermata, and, perhaps as a climax, the statue of the Venus de' Medici. Other absorbing subjects to which he perforce paid attention were geology and mineralogy. In both, his "notions were crude and unsettled," because hitherto he had had no instruction in either. Geology did not exist in America; but through his own efforts he had picked up enough hazy ideas to distinguish a few

minerals. Now these sciences, too, began to unfold before him.

Edinburgh then offered no distinct course in geology, but there were learned geologists, ardent and successful explorers, who introduced geological discussions into their chemical lectures. Two did it heatedly since they belonged to opposing schools of thought. One solved geological phenomena by the Wernerian method, stressing the agency of water. The other argued as vehemently in support of the Huttonian, or igneous theory. Silliman listened eagerly as the great debate raged, torn first from one side to the other but reserving a final judgment until he could examine the evidence for himself. Meanwhile, what he learned made him revise his earlier amateurish suspicions about the nature of New Haven's East and West rocks in favor of a more scientific analysis. He felt so amply repaid for his geological and mineralogical acquirements that he considered this phase of his study alone well worth the sail across the Atlantic.

But, no matter what the subject, so eager was he to profit by every moment that his exertions "pressed hard" upon his health. At times, therefore, he relaxed his labors in order to take exercise and indulge in the "recreations of social intercourse enlivened by female conversation." At "literary breakfasts" and soirées he met eminent personages whose conversation he found stimulating. Thus he kept a healthy balance between work and play. Then twenty-six, he combined ardor of youth with maturity of judgment, making the utmost of this experience. Through it he laid the foundation for a career of greater usefulness. That was why Dwight had sent him.<sup>56</sup>

Having accomplished his purpose, he returned full of enthusiasm for the future. He landed in New York, greeted the friends who had helped him, and then, shunning the stagecoach as too slow, took a packet for New Haven. He started up the Sound on Friday afternoon, expecting to arrive the next morning. But the wind failed, and he was forced to wear away all Saturday and most of Sunday "in listless inaction." Shipboard observance of the Sabbath occupied "some of its hours" with the singing of hymns and reading of sermons. Perhaps as reward for thus remembering the Lord's day, a breeze arose finally, wafting them safely into New Haven harbor. At four o'clock June 1, 1806, he stepped upon



Long Wharf in time to attend evening prayers in the college chapel. After leading the services, his "great and good friend," Dr. Dwight, gave him "a warm, paternal welcome," taking him home to tea. There a "very interesting evening" made him realize he was at home, in his own town and institution.

Only five weeks of the term remained, but Silliman carried the seniors in chemistry as far as the time permitted. With the geological disputes of Edinburgh still ringing in his ears, he rode for miles examining the terrain around New Haven. Noah Webster, of dictionary fame, and other seekers of truth became his companions on these excursions. The first day of September, he reported the results to the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences in a paper on the mineral and geological structure of the region. The following winter he gave his first full course on chemistry, lecturing three and four times a week and introducing the latest geological and mineralogical information. He found it much more satisfactory than his previous efforts. Thus quickly did his months abroad bear fruit.<sup>57</sup>

Under his alert care, the sciences soon flourished in unprecedented glory at Yale. None of her sister seminaries considered geology or mineralogy necessary for the education of their clients. It especially grieved Silliman to see a small but beautiful collection of minerals at a college in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where no one seemed to appreciate it. Mineralogy had not "taken root" there. Visiting Boston in 1807, he found the spirit of that place indeed friendly to literature but dismally unsympathetic to science.<sup>58</sup> On the contrary, New Haven took the broad view, pursuing all knowledge with fervent impartiality. Silliman easily persuaded the Yale Corporation to pay Mr. Benjamin D. Perkins of New York one thousand dollars for his cabinet of minerals.<sup>59</sup>

When Colonel Gibbs of Newport, whose passion for accumulating curious stones Silliman shared so genuinely, offered to deposit at Yale his fabulous collection of ten thousand specimens if the college would provide suitable quarters, Dwight and Silliman immediately jumped at the chance. Knocking out partitions and installing cases, they opened up a suite on the second floor of Connecticut Hall to receive it. Ever tactful, they allowed the Colonel himself to supervise the process. Not even the outbreak of the War

of 1812 with its threat of coastal raids prevented them from moving it into the new gallery. When preparations were at a feverish stage, the Reverend Mr. Ely, a member of the Corporation, did indicate some uneasiness lest the ardent Professor of Chemistry make science overtop Latin and Greek at Yale.

But President Dwight felt no alarm, only pleasure, at these developments. Visitors, great and humble, from far and near, gazed rapturously upon the treasures of the Gibbs Cabinet and spread its fame. Such celebrities as the Honorable Harrison Gray Otis and Colonel David Humphreys joined the chorus of admiration (echoed at a later date by the Honorable Josiah Quincy and Daniel Webster). Even the students became excited over it. Silliman gave it credit for attracting youths to the college. If so, the news is refreshing in an age when institutions of higher learning make themselves attractive by competing in superlative gymnasiums. Certainly the cabinet increased Yale's prestige to such an extent that, after holding it thirteen years on loan, the college decided it was worth keeping and bought it for \$20,000, raised by general subscription.<sup>60</sup> With such equipment Silliman was no longer satisfied to inject geology and mineralogy parenthetically into his chemical lectures. Henceforth he gave separate courses on those subjects in the rooms where the collections were kept. They remained his twin favorites, next to chemistry.

Silliman also soon ventured into still another field of activity. Dwight's son urged him to give a course in the fundamentals of chemistry for the enlightenment of New Haven citizens. The President approved, and a class of forty-five was quickly formed. He gave the lectures, illustrated with experiments, in the evening, beginning the course during the spring vacation so that the ladies would feel no embarrassment in coming to the college laboratory. Once established, it was readily continued into the summer term, with surprisingly successful results, both scientific and matrimonial. It was Silliman's first attempt to explain the new science to a popular audience.<sup>61</sup> In later years he made this an important aspect of his work, gaining a wide reputation throughout the country for himself, the college, and chemistry.

As President Dwight watched the department developing, his enthusiasm grew. He was as busy as any modern college executive,

but he never allowed the pressure of administrative duties to crush his own curiosity about new branches of learning. He had no qualms whatever about attending regularly Silliman's lectures to the seniors, especially those on geology. In the chemical laboratory he sat not in the gallery, but on the same floor with the students, in order to see the experiments clearly. The gusto with which he drank in the truths of the new sciences impressed them, for they had supposed him to be the embodiment of all knowledge. It convinced many that they lived in an era when more wisdom was available than to any previous generation. With Dwight's backing science came to Yale to stay.<sup>62</sup>

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To carry out his plan for a medical school required the perseverance of a saint. The Corporation readily supported him, but he also had to win over the physicians. In 1792, after a prolonged struggle of several years, enlightened leaders of the profession had persuaded the legislature to charter the Connecticut Medical Society.<sup>63</sup> Local county societies already existed but this was a state body upon which the charter bestowed exclusive power to license would-be practitioners and even to confer honorary medical degrees. Although its purpose was to improve professional standards, the idea of forming such an organization had encountered intense hostility. Opposition waned as the Society demonstrated its usefulness, but it was still establishing itself in 1795, when Dwight became President of Yale and brought forth his first suggestion for a medical school there. He talked at length to medical men on the subject, but for a decade was unable to push the business beyond the discussion stage. The new Medical Society, jealous of its hard-won powers, seems to have been suspicious of potential encroachments.<sup>64</sup>

Dwight had to overcome these fears, for the Medical Society guarded all the interests of the profession in Connecticut. Among other things, it prescribed the educational qualifications which candidates for state licenses had to satisfy. These included "a Collegiate Education" followed by two years of professional study with a reputable physician or surgeon; or, for those who lacked the collegiate preparation, three years of medical study with an



approved practitioner. Twenty-one was the age requirement, and all candidates had to show, on examination, a general knowledge of natural philosophy, chemistry, and botany; and a thorough knowledge of materia medica, pharmacy, anatomy, physiology, and the theory and practice of physic and surgery.<sup>65</sup> With the Medical Society functioning vigorously, its cooperation was essential for the success of any plan to improve medical education in the state. Fortunately there were men in it who shared Dwight's conviction as to the importance of the cause.

Under presidential direction the college officially resumed active agitation of the project in 1806 when, at the Corporation's September meeting, the Reverend Nathan Strong, Dwight's old friend and classmate, proposed the establishment of one medical professorship, obviously as the first step towards a school. A committee was appointed to weigh the matter, and evidently, with Dwight's backing, decided against a single professorship in favor of trying at once for the higher goal. It dispatched a letter to the Medical Society asking that body to name a committee to confer at the next Commencement upon the question of establishing a Medical Institution in the college. In May, 1807, the Medical Society responded by appointing such a committee. It seems to have been the tactful suggestion of the Yale people that the representatives of both bodies be equal in number. The conference, thus cautiously composed, took place in Professor Silliman's "chamber" in the Lyceum, Yale's home ground. Dwight headed the academic contingent and accepted the task of presiding. With the aid of his colleagues, he managed to remove the prejudices which some of the medical men brought with them, and "harmonious action ensued." After another consultation the following October, the doctors decided to unite with the "University" in founding a school.<sup>66</sup>

During the winter a joint committee ironed out details of the plan, and in the spring of 1808 "Articles of Union" were submitted to the county medical societies for their consideration. Next October, after another conference with the college, the medical convention adopted the articles with amendments, and ordered a certified copy transmitted to the Yale Corporation for final action. A year later, October, 1809, the Medical Society gathered again for their annual meeting, only to learn from the Lieutenant Gov-

error that through "some neglect or inadvertence" the Articles had not come before the Corporation in September, as scheduled. The convention instructed a committee to request Professor Silliman, who played an active part in all the negotiations, to see that this catastrophe did not happen next year. Annual meetings did not make for speed. At last, in the fall of 1810, the college and the Medical Society agreed upon Articles of Union, and appointed a joint committee to steer the business through the legislature.<sup>67</sup>

The college entrusted its part in this delicate task to Dwight and Silliman. They managed it adroitly. When the General Assembly met in October, 1810, the agenda included a petition, not from the college, which had done quite a bit of begging lately, but from the Medical Society. Even so, it asked for no money, but merely for a change in the charter. The petitioners explained that "in consequence of proposals made to them by the President and Fellows of Yale College," and because of their own conviction of the "incompetency" of the existing means of medical education in the state, they had engaged in long deliberation with the county medical societies and Yale College, and had determined to form a medical seminary, to be styled "The Medical Institution of Yale College." The necessary articles had already been agreed upon between the college and the Medical Society. But the act incorporating the latter lodged exclusively with it the power of examining candidates for medical licenses and conferring degrees; the Medical Society, of course, had no desire to surrender these powers but wished legislative permission to exercise them jointly in the future with the new Medical Institution. Herein lies a hint of what must have been one of the vital points conciliated in the preceding parleys.<sup>68</sup>

The petition asked for nothing more, although it explained the reasons which "led the Corporation of Yale College to propose, and the Medical Society to concur in" the establishment of a medical school. First, they pointed out, several sister states and most of the European countries had such seminaries; Connecticut had none. Any of her young men who wished to become a doctor but could not afford to seek the required education abroad, had to secure it by serving a student apprenticeship under a busy practitioner. This method might be adequate for students of law or theology, a knowledge of which could be attained chiefly by reading and re-

flection, since the problems were intellectual. But in medicine, they argued, one had to gain practical skill in the use of surgical instruments and a precise knowledge of anatomy and therapeutics. This could only be accomplished by actually seeing experiments and demonstrations, as well as by access to a complete professional library. It was unthinkable for a surgeon to use a knife without knowing every nerve and artery; or for a physician to ask a patient to swallow a drug unless he knew what the result would be. The expense of journeying to Europe or to "the great towns" of America for proper training was too "formidable" for all except the opulent few, and for those the moral hazards were dangerous "in no trifling degree." A medical school in Connecticut, founded now, would grow in usefulness and be a blessing to posterity. Yale College was the obvious place for it, one reason of "much weight" being that the chemical department was already established there on a scale "more extensive and complete than any other in this country." These were the arguments which had led the President and Fellows of Yale College to make the proposal, and their tone has a distinctly "Dwightish" ring. Coming from the Medical Society, they sounded all the more convincing. The legislature acknowledged their force in an act granting the prayer of the petitioners. It embodied the agreement between the Medical Society and Yale College, establishing the Medical Institution for which Dwight had worked and waited so long.<sup>69</sup>

According to that arrangement, the Medical Institution was to offer "a complete circle of medical science," by which they meant "chymistry" and pharmacy; the theory and practice of medicine; anatomy, surgery, and midwifery; and materia medica and botany. Four professorships would cover the ground. To make certain that all Connecticut doctors received the benefit of this instruction, a significant addition was appended to existing requirements for a state medical license. Before presenting themselves for examination all candidates now had to attend one course of lectures in each of these fields at the Medical Institution. During the negotiations the medical men had objected that this stipulation might exclude meritorious but indigent young men because of inability to pay the fees. Professor Silliman satisfied them with a happy suggestion. It was agreed to admit gratis one student from each county, selected



by the local medical society for "intelligence, worth, and poverty." The gesture cost the professors precious revenue, for there were eight counties and tuition was set at fifty dollars.<sup>70</sup>

In the same spirit of compromise they solved the problem of examining candidates for licenses. The professors of the Institution plus an equal number of members of the Medical Society, named at their annual convention, constituted a committee to handle the matter. The president of the medical convention, ex officio, became president of the examining committee, with a vote and also the power to break a tie.<sup>71</sup> As in the past, emoluments arising from licenses were to flow to the Medical Society. But the President of Yale was to confer degrees and sign diplomas, for which the recipients had to part with good money. Every person examined for the degree of Doctor of Medicine had to pay four dollars to the President of the college, three dollars to each examiner present, and ten dollars to the treasury of the Medical Society. On the other hand, all students who attended two courses might continue thereafter free of charge, and the licensing of a candidate automatically made him a member of the state and county medical societies. It was far from a money-making proposition.<sup>72</sup>

With these various problems settled and legislative authorization won, they were ready to get the school under way. This took three more years. It was not until September 10, 1811, that the Yale Corporation appointed a committee to unite with one from the Medical Society "for carrying into execution the Medical Institution of Yale College." Finding a faculty was the big task. In the spring of 1812, after a winter's debate, they chose Dr. Mason F. Cogswell as Professor of Surgery and Anatomy, with Dr. Jonathan Knight as his assistant. Cogswell, a Yale man eminently qualified, hesitated to leave Hartford where he was absorbed in pioneer work for deaf mutes. In the end he declined the professorship, consenting, "somewhat reluctantly," to render occasional assistance at first and allow his name to stand as a shield for Knight. The latter was a young Yale graduate of the class of 1808 who, after serving as a tutor, was studying medicine in Philadelphia that winter of 1811-1812. With Cogswell nominally in charge and Knight actually doing the work as Assistant Professor of Surgery and Anatomy, it was hoped that the former's fame would counterbalance the

younger man's inexperience in the public eye. There was no question of Knight's ability; like Silliman, he was appointed on promise rather than past performance, and again the selection was wise. But some one of repute was badly needed.<sup>73</sup>

The obvious person was Dr. Nathan Smith of Hanover, New Hampshire, who, except for one insuperable consideration, fitted the place perfectly. Then fifty, he was the right age, old enough to command respect and yet at a comfortable distance from senility. Medical colleagues everywhere recognized him as one of the profession's most talented members. His name would lend distinction and establish the new institution's reputation. He would contribute more than that, for he overflowed with energy, and his experience had been along lines which peculiarly qualified him for the work at hand. Brought up on a frontier farm in Vermont, he had taken a few Revolutionary shots at the British, and then seemed destined to follow his father in a career behind the plow. One day he joined a curious crowd to watch an amputation. The doctor asked for help, and young Smith volunteered—holding the leg and tying the arteries without a quiver, as directed. So fascinating was the experience that he made up his mind on the spot that he wanted more; and he persuaded the physician to take him as a pupil.

After three years of study, he set up for himself in New Hampshire. Two years convinced him he might profit from the medical lectures at Harvard, and he stopped long enough to take a Bachelor of Medicine degree from that institution. Then he resumed a prospering practice. Being the only doctor for miles around, he saw how sorely Vermont and New Hampshire needed trained physicians. He proposed to President Wheelock of Dartmouth College that they provide facilities for increasing the supply by establishing a medical school. Wheelock approved but the trustees insisted upon taking a year to ponder the matter. Only three colleges in the country then taught medicine—Pennsylvania, Columbia, and Harvard—and the step seemed to be something of an adventure.

While the governing board meditated Dr. Smith could not stand idly by, hoping for a favorable decision in the fullness of time, and he decided to prepare himself more adequately for teaching. Besides, he was restless over mysteries of medical science which neither Harvard nor experience in the woods of New Hampshire had

solved for him. So, temporarily, he left wife, child, and practice to seek further knowledge at the fountain head, in Edinburgh University and the hospitals of London. Not even a midwinter sail across the Atlantic, on borrowed money, held him back. After nine months abroad, he returned safely to found the Dartmouth medical school in 1798. For years the faculty remained small but strong in all departments, consisting of the solitary Dr. Nathan Smith who presented the entire curriculum unassisted. His mastery of the field drew students in gratifying numbers; and yet, he kept up a busy practice over a wide, rough territory, fighting epidemics and solving the riddles of disease, all at the same time. In surgery, especially, his methods were original, the fruit of his own observation and experience. He proved their worth by performing successful operations, the true test of surgical skill in any era. A pupil praised him as equal, if not superior, to any surgeon in the country, and a man generally admired and beloved. Dr. Smith's own generation, as well as those since, ranked him among America's notable medical pioneers.<sup>74</sup>

Here, unmistakably, was the man. Uncommonly able organizer, teacher, practitioner, and scientific thinker, he had faced at Dartmouth the problems ahead of the Yale school, including a state legislature. From the beginning, whenever candidates for the faculty were under discussion, his name was mentioned. He possessed an "extensive medical library and anatomical museum," equipment of value to a new school without funds. A disciple from Yale studying under him at Hanover prophesied that most of the sixty students there would follow him to New Haven in order to have the double benefit of his and Silliman's instruction. Middlebury and Boston both sought his services, but without hesitation Smith let it be known that he would be pleased to go to Yale. He considered it "the first institution" in the United States, with the ablest professors and "under the best regulations." So high was his opinion of Silliman that, without further ado, he admitted to Dartmouth's court of Hippocrates one who had attended the chemical lectures in New Haven. Smith had no doubts about the future success of a medical school there, and was more than willing to help speed it on the way. Leaving Hanover might mean financial loss, but he wanted relief from the many burdens which Dartmouth put upon him.<sup>75</sup>



No one was better fitted to send the Yale Medical Institution off to a flying start. But Dwight said Dr. Smith would not do.

The President and the Yale Corporation agreed that Smith satisfied all requirements, except one. That alone, in their eyes, disqualified him. The man was an infidel. Having lived on the fringe of civilization in northern New England where the notions of Ethan Allen and Tom Paine ensnared so many, Nathan Smith, too, had succumbed to the prevailing fever. Call it deism, atheism, irreligion, or any other allied doctrine, it was the same disease to a diagnostician like Dwight. He would have no such person spreading the infection at Yale, no matter what the gentleman's talents, reputation, and learning might be. Although many, especially among medical men, felt that Smith's opinions on Divine Revelation should not debar him, the Corporation supported Dwight wholeheartedly.<sup>76</sup>

Only Dr. Smith himself could solve the difficulty, and fortunately he did. His religious "sentiments" underwent "an entire alteration." He "fully renounced his infidelity in repeated conversations with intimate friends and to his class to whom he spoke in such terms of his past and present views as drew tears from both speaker and hearers." The testimony substantiating his recantation was so unquestionably authentic as to convince Dwight of the genuineness of his conversion. It must have been real. Those who knew Smith best, insisted that he was too high-minded to stoop to duplicity.<sup>77</sup> The doctor himself, wrote Cogswell, frankly admitted that President Dwight's objections had been well founded and "such as a wise and good man would always consider as all important." But he added, "My earnest prayer now is to live to undo all the evil I have done by expressing my doubts as to the truth of Divine Revelation, and to render to Society all the good my talents and powers will permit me to do."<sup>78</sup>

Such a complete Christian-like change of heart created a new attitude on the part of the powers at Yale. At the close of the autumn vacation in 1812, Dwight returned to New Haven ready to reconsider the appointment. The President had apparently investigated thoroughly. Dr. Cogswell corresponded with Smith and regarded him favorably. Dr. Eli Ives and Professor Silliman, two other prime organizers of the medical school, now concurred.

Smith wrote that he would be happy to fill any place in the new institution for which they might consider him qualified, remarking that he had always regarded New Haven as a place "more favourably situated for a medical school than any other in New England." Indeed he ventured the opinion that nothing was wanting but "the united efforts of several persons suitably qualified" to erect a school there which would "very soon exceed anything of the kind this side Philadelphia." That from a Harvard Bachelor of Medicine was tactful. Silliman thought Smith would be "a great acquisition," and that with his reputation and exertions, plus Yale's other advantages, the school would at once "rise to a point which it would probably otherwise take years to attain." When the medical school opened for classes in the fall of 1813, the Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, Surgery, and Obstetrics was Dr. Nathan Smith. He remained steadfast in his renunciation of infidelity. He never made a formal profession of faith, but attended church regularly, and, when his moment came, died firm in the hope of the gospel.<sup>79</sup>

The other appointments caused less trouble. Dr. Eneas Munson, the grand old man of Connecticut medical circles, gave the school additional prestige as Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany. Possessing a sense of humor which profound intellectual attainments could not subdue, he carried the weight of seventy-nine years lightly. But he was not expected to serve actively, being content to give advice and occasionally have a laugh at the President's expense. When Dr. Munson gave a student a certificate of illness, he wanted it accepted. One boy took the necessary document to Dr. Dwight to be excused from recitations. Lest there be any mistake, the head of the college took a look at the young man's tongue himself. Finding it "clean," he promptly refused an excuse. The desperate youth returned to Dr. Munson, who gave him some coloring matter to put on his tongue, and then, upon second examination, the President sent the boy to bed. Munson's stratagems never lessened the institution's reputation.<sup>80</sup>

While the wise old man did the honors of the chair, his former pupil, Dr. Eli Ives (Yale, 1799) performed the duties. With academic subtlety, they called the younger colleague "Adjunct Professor" until he succeeded to the master's title. Dwight was re-

sourceful at solving thorny problems of that kind. In the light of his attitude toward Dr. Smith, it is interesting that he did not hold Dr. Ives' early political views against him. At the time of Mr. Jefferson's first election as President of the country, Ives had been guilty of gross jubilation. Instead of mourning it as a national disaster, he had rejoiced at the victory in the vociferous manner of the lowest democrat. For some time he continued to give Federalists reason to feel that he was far better at *materia medica* than at politics. Perhaps by 1812 his speech, if not his opinions, had grown milder; for, Dwight, a stalwart Federalist among the stalwarts, was inclined to place Jeffersonians in the same category as infidels. In any event, during the struggle to erect the medical school, Dr. Ives supported the cause in the Medical Society so enthusiastically, and was so well fitted, that Dwight willingly saw him rewarded.<sup>81</sup>

The remaining faculty members were Benjamin Silliman, who took care of chemistry, and Jonathan Knight, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology. Silliman enlarged the laboratory to accommodate the medical students along with the undergraduates, although he placed them in separate seats and also gave them distinct instruction both in lectures and in recitations.<sup>82</sup> For Knight it was the beginning of fifty-one years with the Institution. He had had only two winters in which to prepare himself, and, of course, had no experience as a practitioner. Silliman advised him to teach Anatomy because it was a subject he could handle without having practiced; whereas no young man could command public confidence immediately in surgery or midwifery. These he could pick up from Dr. Nathan Smith, whose presence would be beneficial in other ways as well. It would augment Knight's fees by drawing students and making the school prosper at once. Silliman urged Knight to take up surgery because, he said, "a good surgeon is extremely wanted here and would not fail to be supported, if prudent." Smith's "patronage" would bring him business; for, all the medical professors had to practice in order to make a living.<sup>83</sup> It was not long before Dr. Knight was quite able to stand upon his own. Eventually he succeeded to Smith's mantle as the state's foremost surgeon. All together, the original faculty (it remained unchanged for sixteen years) satisfied Dwight's best hopes.

To secure proper equipment without funds, was another pressing



problem. The Yale Corporation contributed a bell, tables and seats for lecture rooms and dining hall, and similar essentials.<sup>84</sup> But Dr. Ives wanted a botanical garden, and the only way he got one was at his own expense. He established it along Grove Street, next to the Institution's building, put up a hothouse, and planted a variety of native and foreign plants, shrubs, herbs, and even trees, mostly reputed to be of a medicinal nature. Jonathan Knight's effort to provide anatomical exhibits was still more heroic. Silliman wheedled the Prudential Committee into appropriating two hundred dollars with which to meet the expense. They commissioned Knight to procure the paraphernalia while attending medical lectures in Philadelphia during the winter of 1811-1812. Since none of the businessmen in the City of Brotherly Love trafficked in human anatomy, he, like the medical students, was left to his own devices.

Silliman advised him as to what would be desirable, giving him a formidable inventory. It included three skeletons: one with the bones connected by wires, which could be suspended by a cord and pulley in the anatomical room in full view of the class for constant reference; the second similarly put together but capable of having the bones unhooked and shown separately when necessary; and the third with the bones connected by the natural ligaments dried and varnished. One of them, he thought, ought to be a female. In addition, they would want plenty of separate bones of various types and sizes, several crania, prepared hearts and livers, some "injected lymphaticks," and the like. These were the treasures Knight was to find, on two hundred dollars; but Silliman told him to stay on in Philadelphia after the medical lectures were over, if need be, promising to justify the expense to the committee. He further encouraged Knight by reporting that he had heard President Dwight tell the committee that sooner or later "we must spend \$2000 on the anatomical department; so you see there is a spirit of enterprise & liberality."

It was good experience for the young man because, although he obtained Dr. Wistar's aid, he had to prepare most of the specimens himself. After remaining "assiduously employed," he brought the results of his devoted labors back to New Haven in the spring. This turned out to be the most risky part of the business. He landed his burden at Norwalk, depositing it temporarily in a store. But "the

thing got wind," and the natives worked themselves into something of a frenzy, suspecting he had dead bodies in his boxes. For his own safety as well as that of his winter's work, Knight discreetly transferred his load to a wagon and during the night stole quietly out of town toward New Haven. Arriving safely, his gruesome packages received a cordial reception in Dr. Ives' garret. Silliman called it a valuable collection which would make a "respectable beginning." With hearty presidential approval, Knight spent a second winter in Philadelphia with his appointment to the medical faculty assured.<sup>85</sup>

With an able faculty and more than thirty students, classes began in the fall of 1813, eighteen years after Dwight had started discussing the project.<sup>86</sup> They found quarters in a building at the head of College Street, leased from James Hillhouse, who had intended it for a tavern. Eluding the hostelry's commercial atmosphere in favor of Dwight's paternalistic conception of academic life, the Medical Institution strove to make itself a happy family. Common meals were served in the basement; above were the lecture and dormitory rooms. The habits of the college routine were introduced, although Silliman, who had seen medical schools function, doubted the Corporation's wisdom in attempting morning and evening prayers. With the faculty officiating, the effort succeeded beyond his expectations, as long as Dwight remained at the helm. Religious meetings were held even on Sabbath evenings. The President guarded the moral character of the medical students as alertly as that of the undergraduates. He wanted no infidels and was fully aware of the temptations facing the young beginners. During his successor's administration the homelike atmosphere had to be abandoned; noisy students interfered with the studious, and space devoted to sleeping quarters became needed for "public uses."<sup>87</sup>

Despite an auspicious beginning, Dwight and the founders knew before they started that the Medical Institution would never survive without funds. They wisely postponed asking for money until after the school was already under way. Then, in May, 1814, acting officially through the faculty, they applied to the legislature with a plea of desperation. Their petition shrewdly pointed out the awkward position in which the General Assembly found itself—although, of course, the supporters of the school made no claim to responsibility for putting it there. Since a law of its own making

now required candidates for medical licenses to receive public instruction, certainly the legislature should make compliance possible by providing the facilities.

Connecticut, the petitioners went on to say, must jealously maintain its well deserved reputation for "a wide and liberal attention to the dissemination of knowledge, among its citizens." This was all the more important because it was a small state "with a population already so great, that it will not admit for a long time of any serious augmentation; destitute of any great cities which may throw a degree of splendor over its name, by their commerce and their arts; inferior in physical form, not only to most of the ancient States of the union, but to several of the more recent ones; Connecticut can look to nothing but to the preservation of her Character, for that share of influence, among her sister states, which she has so uniformly enjoyed." This was irresistible persuasion of a quality and tone, again, suspiciously Dwightish. If Connecticut was too small to hope for great political or economic power, the reasoning ran, she might at least achieve great things intellectually, in literature, art, and science. She could specifically not afford to lag behind other enlightened countries and her sister states, in supporting medical science. The petitioners repeated the arguments of 1810 to show the necessity for a local school, and did not neglect to mention that the new institution's faculty received no salaries but depended entirely upon fees. These were small, and the admission of eight students gratis reduced the meager revenue by \$400. The students, on their part, felt it unreasonable that they should bear the burden of paying rent for a private building, as under the existing state of affairs. In brief, without a proper building, commons, library, dormitory, and laboratory equipment, it was impossible to conduct a medical school of which Connecticut might be proud. Dwight knew how to present the case convincingly.<sup>88</sup>

To the state's honor, the General Assembly responded generously. At that very session, it granted \$20,000 out of funds accruing to the state from the incorporation of the Phoenix Bank. The medical school's managers wasted no time in using \$12,500 to buy the building which it was then occupying, and two acres of land adjoining. They made purchases for a library and anatomical museum; and \$1,200 put a fence around the botanical garden, erected



culture rooms, and built a house for the gardener. Since the Medical Institution itself was not incorporated, the legislature authorized the President and Fellows of Yale College to hold all property for the sole benefit of the medical school, making them responsible to the General Assembly for their proceedings. Within a year, the trustees reported happily that the prosperity of the Medical Institution was equaling the hopes of its friends. It had taken a long time, but Dwight lived to see it all accomplished, and to hand medical diplomas to three graduating classes.<sup>89</sup>

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Dwight dreamed, too, of the day when Yale would have a proper divinity school. At the time that he began to work out his plans for the college's expansion, theological seminaries did not exist in this country, not even in New England. True, the founders of Yale, as of Harvard, though eager to advance the cause of learning in general, had had uppermost in mind the need for providing their Connecticut Canaan with an educated clergy. Like the medieval universities whose traditions they inherited, they followed a curriculum so rich in theology that graduates might step at once into the clerical order. As time passed, conditions changed. The country's increasing population gradually grew capable of supporting greater specialization in trades and professions. The Great Awakening in the middle of the eighteenth century also exercised an influence in New England commonly overlooked. Although its revivalism tended generally toward excessive emotionalism, to the disparagement of learning, in both pulpit and pew, the excitement of the movement kindled among the New England clergy a new interest in systematic theological inquiry. It stirred up questions which had to be answered, arousing vigorous doctrinal debate and controversy which produced much fruit in the teachings of Edwardians and their opponents throughout the latter half of the century. In this atmosphere young men, in New England, felt the need of more thorough preparation for a ministerial career.

This was particularly true of the disciples of Jonathan Edwards. They wanted an experienced hand to guide them through the intricacies of metaphysical speculation, and to advise them in the practical problems of administering a parish. As the undergraduate

course of study broadened to embrace an increasing variety of subjects, it became too general and too secular to satisfy the special demands of professional training. To prepare adequately, candidates for the ministry, fresh from college, began the practice of apprenticing themselves under some clergyman known to be a competent instructor. He could give them the same sort of initiation into their profession that law students acquired in the offices of practicing lawyers before the days of law schools.

One of the earliest of these theological teachers was the Reverend Joseph Bellamy, pastor in the small Connecticut town of Bethlehem. He had been a friend of the great Edwards, but the publication, in 1750, of his treatise *True Religion Delineated* established his own fame as a thinker. Students eager to have the benefit of contact with such a man soon came to him asking to be led through a course in divinity. Yielding to the demand, he turned his house into a small theological boarding school. Others followed his example; and their pupils, in turn, adopting the same methods of instruction, spread the system until it became common practice in New England during the second half of the eighteenth century.

The training which they provided had definite virtues. The instructor usually opened the theological floodgates by handing the beginner a formidable list of questions on fundamentals (Jonathan Edwards, the younger, thought of over three hundred for his pupils). These covered the main features of a complete system of divinity, beginning with the primary problem of how to prove the existence and perfection of God, atheists and deists notwithstanding, and ending with the attainment of perpetual happiness by the righteous or everlasting misery by the wicked, as the case might be. In the process of finding answers to these basic problems, the neophyte read whatever his master's library and chance put in his way. If the number of books was limited, he offset that handicap by rereading again and again the few which were available. Solids like Edwards on Original Sin, or Hopkins on Holiness, required thorough mastication anyway before digestion. It was considered better to devour a few such meaty morsels leisurely than to hurry through many.

Besides, reading the opinions of others was not enough. The student must learn to make his own interpretations. He was not

to attach himself to any preconceived human system of divinity but, unbiased, to seek for himself the truth in the inspired word of Scripture. Only by "prayerfully" studying the Bible and meditating long upon what he found there, could he ever devise a system of his own. After investigating a given topic, therefore, he put his conclusions into a written "dissertation" which he read aloud to his instructor and fellow students. They then debated the sufficiency of his arguments, exposing the author's weaknesses, literary as well as theological, in friendly criticism. His preceptor pointed out the road to improvement, solved any difficulties, and explained his own views, together with those of the leading writers, on the doctrine under discussion. It was a method not unlike that of the modern seminar.

Having thus mastered the mysteries of the world's accumulated dogma, the student proceeded to the art of writing sermons. Here again his efforts were subjected to the same critical purifying fire. If he produced a worthy composition, he might be allowed to try it out at a parish gathering. This was the exciting part of his training. He was truly an apprentice who acquired a practical insight into pastoral duties by participating in them. He saw infants baptized, couples married, and the dead buried. He attended conferences and prayer meetings, and, if God saw fit, witnessed the glorious work of a revival. The Reverend John Woodbridge assigned to each of his students a section of the parish where the novice conducted one religious meeting a week, visited the sick, and became acquainted with all the families in that district. By giving his students a share in his responsibilities, Woodbridge gained more time for their instruction, and they obtained experience which stood them in good stead when they first faced a congregation of their own.

Living intimately in the family of a distinguished pastor, conversing with him daily, taking turns at household prayers, hearing him preach, observing how he solved the doubts of perplexed sinners and led his flock into green pastures, the apprentice learned the trade in an intensely practical way. This was the chief value of the system. The library might be small, and since a busy clergyman could seldom devote more than an hour or two each day to pedagogy, the student was left largely to his own resources. But



if the example before him was inspiring and the beginner himself alert, the training was good.<sup>90</sup>

The disadvantages academically were obvious, and Dwight was one of the first to seek to remove them. The colleges were not without provision for advanced theological study. Harvard and Yale each had a Professor of Divinity who supervised such work. When Dwight became President, the post at Yale happened to be vacant; and the Corporation, having difficulty in filling it, asked him to take the chair temporarily. He, as well as they, intended this to be a provisional arrangement, because the professorship was a full-time position; also, Dwight gave Calvinism a strong New Divinity twist, and the Old Divinity supporters of Stiles probably preferred to have a man of their own way of thinking in the college pulpit. But the Corporation failed in several attempts to persuade a satisfactory person to accept the position. Four years passed, and each year the Board renewed its request that President Dwight "supply" the chapel pulpit for another twelve months. For this additional task they paid him \$335 annually.

In spite of the fact that the Presidency itself would have kept a normal man busy, Dwight performed the duties of the professorship with distinct success; and the Corporation began to believe they would never find any one who would be so acceptable. At their meeting in September, 1799, by ballot, they unanimously elected him Professor of Divinity "for the ensuing year." He refused to consent to anything but an annual appointment, and the next year he was appointed a member of a committee "to derive a plan for procuring a Professor of Divinity." This resulted in a decision to select "some candidate for the ministry"; and in 1801 they appointed Henry Davis, then a young tutor in the college and a favorite of Dwight's.

In so doing, the Corporation, probably at Dwight's suggestion, adopted the method used in selecting a Professor of Chemistry. Since they could not find an older candidate, they picked a promising young man who had to be given time and money to obtain the necessary training. As a teacher of theology an experienced man would have been preferable. But the Professor of Divinity was also pastor of the college church, with duties like those of any other shepherd of a flock. Churches customarily called young

licentiates fresh from theological studies, expecting them to stay for life. Why should not the college church do the same? While Professor elect Davis pursued his preparation, the Corporation paid him \$335 and gave the same amount to Dwight, who was actually doing the work. But in 1805 ill health forced Mr. Davis to withdraw from the professorship before he could enter upon its duties. The discouraged and desperate Corporation then prevailed upon Dwight to keep the post permanently. They raised his stipend to five hundred dollars in order to permit him to have the services of an amanuensis. This was all he would take, and only the weakness of his eyes made him consent to an amanuensis. Although the latter position paid little, seniors sought it eagerly in order to have the benefit of intimate contact with the President. When Silliman, then in England, received the news, he wrote to a colleague:

Dr. Dwight, it seems, is *rising*; he may live to be a tutor yet if he goes on at this rate. I need not tell you how well I am pleased that since we are thwarted with respect to Mr. Davis, we may still sit under his (Dr. Dwight's) preaching.

So it was that, throughout his administration, President Dwight was also Professor of Divinity.<sup>91</sup>

His professorial duties included the instruction of resident graduates preparing for the ministry. This was no new business to him, since he had done it regularly at Greenfield Hill. Yale, then, offered essentially the same training as the apprentice system provided. Her divinity students merely enjoyed certain important advantages—tutelage of superior quality under Dwight, and access to the college library as well as to Professor Kingsley who heard them in Biblical Criticism. These facilities surpassed those available in the usual country parish, but the students went through the same paces. They wrote papers, read sacred and profane history (Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History* was a common guide), and learned, sometimes almost word for word, the works of Edwards, Bellamy, Hopkins, and other notable authorities, not forgetting Dwight's own sermons.

Serious students, undergraduates as well as graduates, took notes on the latter as the President-Professor preached them in the chapel. Sometimes he allowed them to read one of his manuscripts. But to

be his amanuensis, the tool by which he wrote those masterly discourses, was the privilege of privileges. Any freshman who stayed the full four years at Yale heard Dwight's entire system of theology, preached at the rate of one sermon each Sabbath morning. In senior year he also had the benefit of special classroom instruction in the subject from the President himself. Yale graduates, therefore, were especially well prepared for advanced work there.

One winter Dwight's theological class included all six tutors of the college and nine resident graduates. Some stayed one year, others two; but no specified time requirements were laid down. Each pupil set his own pace according to talent and inclination. Dwight met them as a group once a week although they could see him individually at other times. He also made it his custom to address the regular meeting of the members of the college church every Saturday evening. After speaking on some religious topic, he retired, leaving the younger members free to discuss among themselves whatever trend of thought his remarks might have stimulated. On the practical side Dwight's Greenfield experience enabled him to give his students all the advice they needed concerning pastoral care, while New Haven afforded opportunities for actual demonstration. They catechized children, attended prayer and conference meetings, studied the workings of missionary and Bible societies, and preached occasionally from the chapel pulpit. Under Dwight, Yale produced each year a small but splendidly trained crop of ministers. The founders should have been well pleased.<sup>92</sup>

It did not satisfy Dwight. With certain of his clerical brethren he shared a growing conviction that higher academic standards were needed. Young men, they felt, should not be allowed to enter the ministry less adequately prepared for the profession than those who went into law or medicine. "What," asked the founders of Andover, "is the value of property, health, or life compared with that of immortal souls?"<sup>93</sup> To them it was imperative that a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord should have the best possible preliminary training. Under the prevailing system an apprentice seldom devoted more than a few months to theological study, and he spent those with an active head of a church who had little time for



students or scholarly research. Such a teacher necessarily neglected important matters like Hebrew and biblical criticism because he could not possibly master all branches of theological learning. On the other hand, an academic specialist, with no outside distractions, might well conquer one field. The solution, clear to Dwight and a few others, lay in the establishment of professional schools possessing adequate library facilities, complete curricula, and faculties of experts.

Other motives impelled them to the same conclusion. More ministers, as well as better trained ones, were required in a rapidly growing country. Most pressing of all was the necessity of making certain that they would be qualified to counteract the daring strides being made by the enemies of religion. In an age when Frenchmen bowed down before altars dedicated to Reason, when heretics and infidels lurked everywhere, the guardians of Christianity could not be too energetic.<sup>94</sup>

Hence it was that Andover Theological Seminary, the first in New England, was founded. The immediate circumstances which led to this event were urgent. The Unitarians captured control of Harvard. In 1805, after a bitter battle, the Overseers appointed an avowed exponent of that mistaken school of thought as Professor of Divinity. The next year they confirmed the error by electing a President whose views tended dangerously in the same direction. With hallowed Harvard lost, Trinitarians proceeded speedily to erect a new stronghold. Each group, the Old and the New Divinity camps, at first considered setting up a seminary of its own. But after a mighty effort they wisely decided to combine resources in the face of a common enemy, and together established one seminary at Andover.

Dwight supported the movement vigorously, and his influence was an important factor in its success. The Harvard election filled him with orthodox alarm; in fact he reported that it created "very serious sensations" throughout Connecticut and western Massachusetts. Eager to wipe out the defeat, he did everything he could to bring about a union between the mutually suspicious Old Calvinists and Hopkinsians in Massachusetts. He showed them the obvious truth that division only weakened their own cause, since both were vitally concerned with maintaining the doctrine of the Trinity.

During the difficult negotiations between the two sects, Dwight (despite his painfully afflicted eyes) wrote letters to the right people, conferred with the Reverend Jedidiah Morse and others in New Haven, and, at a critical juncture in the summer of 1807, traveled to Boston in order to work more actively for harmony. Finally, with an endowment at hand, they achieved an agreement.

The founders then consulted Dwight regarding appointments to the faculty, curriculum, and details of the whole plan. It had long been his habit to urge his own theological students to spend at least one and preferably two years in their preparation. This was contrary to prevailing custom which considered eight or nine months sufficient and anything over that a waste of time. Even Dwight cautiously advised the Andover authorities against attempting a three-year course at first, because, he told them, "some of our best young men at Yale College are, when they leave us so far advanced in life, as to render it inconvenient to spend more than two years, altho' their expenses should be furnished." Nevertheless, Andover, unwilling to compromise, adopted a three-year course. But they found Dwight such a useful adviser that they appointed him one of the Governing Board of three Visitors; and he remained a member as long as he lived. They wanted the Honorable Caleb Strong as another, and asked Dwight to persuade him. It was one of the best pieces of diplomacy accomplished in the whole business. Dwight made this persuasive appeal to that distinguished citizen:

I have lately been requested by Doctor Morse to urge you to the acceptance of the Visitorship in the new Theological Institution at Andover. I perfectly coincide with him in the belief that your acceptance, were it but for a single year, would be an event of very great, & very propitious, importance to the Institution, & to the cause of Religion in the country. You will probably be the last man, to estimate your influence aright; & will of course place it below the true standard. Permit me to say that I am certain of the happiest consequences to both these interesting objects from your acceptance even for a short time. There is much to be done, in which your legal knowledge, experience, judgement, & character, would be of the last importance to success. I need not tell you how necessary a good beginning is to every design; nor how much Dr. Pearson, Doctor Morse, myself, & all the friends of the truth in this country, would be encouraged, & gratified. No design has ever been formed in the U.S. of higher importance, or greater

usefulness to Religion. Nor has a more noble generosity been often displayed. It would give me the greatest pleasure to meet you there; & not a little strengthen my hopes of a prosperous issue.<sup>95</sup>

In the same letter Dwight also solicited Mr. and Mrs. Strong's permission for his eldest son to "address" Miss Strong, naming certain witnesses in New Haven who were qualified to testify as to his son's character, and indicating that young Dwight had already attained prosperity in a thriving business there. Governor Strong found it impossible to resist pleas made so effectively. On September 28, 1808, the seminary opened with appropriate exercises. Dwight came from Connecticut to give the new venture his blessing. He preached a sermon; officially invested Dr. Eliphalet Pearson with one of the two professorships; and closed the proceedings with a prayer. It was the beginning of Andover's memorable career, and others soon followed the example.<sup>96</sup>

One of Dwight's most cherished desires was to establish at Yale a theological department of similar scope and merit. When the Andover project started, Doctors Morse and Spring came from Massachusetts to consult him. At that early interview he explained to them his plans for improving the facilities at Yale. While his enthusiasm for the Andover enterprise encouraged those two leaders to go forward with it, Dwight gave them friendly notice that when Yale found the means of establishing a professional school of her own, they should not consider it as interfering with their undertaking. Because of his wish, Dwight's eldest son had even then set aside certain private investments which he hoped would prove sufficiently profitable to endow a professorship. This did not materialize until five years after his father's death when at last, in the President's honor, the college was able to establish the "Dwight Professorship of Didactic Theology," with Nathaniel W. Taylor, Dwight's beloved pupil, as the first incumbent. Yale's Divinity School thus began, and Dwight's earnest desire was accomplished. His successors, worthy of the responsibility which he bequeathed them, saw that the college fulfilled the purpose of its founders by continuing always to train candidates for the ministry.<sup>97</sup>

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So it was with Dwight's entire plan to erect a university. He



understood the disadvantage of depending upon temporary instructorships which changed hands every two or three years. He also appreciated the value of specialization, emphasizing the point that ten men working on separate parts could manufacture many more pins per day than one man working alone on the whole process. He said the same was true of almost every human business, including instruction. One teacher could not have equal mastery over all branches of knowledge. Each, Dwight recognized, offered a full-time career in itself. The appointment of his three chief associates to permanent professorships was no accident.

By choosing the particular young men whom he so wisely selected, Dwight shaped the institution's development for half a century or more. Jeremiah Day, made Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in 1801, became Dwight's successor, serving as President for twenty-nine years. He was the first to resign, in 1846, but continued a member of the Corporation until shortly before his death in 1867. His lifelong colleague, James L. Kingsley (appointed in 1805) retired in 1851; and Benjamin Silliman (appointed in 1802) carried on vigorously until 1853. Beginning their professorial careers at about the same time, all three watched Dwight work out his program from the start. The utmost harmony and confidence characterized their relations with him and with one another. They could always go to the President certain of being heard with sympathetic understanding. He cheered them in their disappointments, and encouraged them in anything, no matter what the department, which would improve the college immediately or for the future. He aimed at a high goal and stimulated his associates (who were all Yale men keenly interested in the college's betterment) to seize every opportunity to accomplish their common purpose.

He wanted to make Yale a place of universal learning, where young Americans might be more perfectly educated for the professions as well as in those general studies which would enrich the life of any cultivated gentleman. The first petition which the Corporation sent to the legislature over Dwight's signature as President urged the desirability of having additional professorships in the college, notably a Professor of Modern Languages and a Professor of Belles Lettres and Rhetoric. Dwight himself tried to

fill the need for the latter by instructing the seniors in belles lettres and oratory as he had done when a tutor. He also wanted the college to have a botanical garden, and lived to see it happily begun. If he could have found the money, he would have added collections in the various departments of natural history. In other words, Dwight had a vision of what Yale University was to become. Sharing it with his three able young colleagues, he began to make the dream come true. After he had gone, they, aided by a string of other disciples,<sup>98</sup> carried on as though he were still there to guide them. Building "a ruined college" into a university was a long process. Dwight got it well under way, and, in doing so, set a standard which confronted his successors as a continual challenge. They liked to think that they were meeting it as he would have had them. To have such loyal coadjutors complete his plans was the next best thing to doing so himself.<sup>99</sup>

## CHAPTER VIII

### College Life Under Dwight

UNDER DWIGHT'S CARE the young gentlemen at Yale grazed intellectually in a green pasture. If it seems scrubby beside today's fields of clover, the comparison is misleading. Then as now, according to the standard of the age, good grass could be found inside the Yale fence. It was not difficult to open the gate. Zedekiah Barstow, of the class of 1813, entered in a manner typical of the time.

He faced the barrier none too well prepared to unfasten it. As a boy on a farm in Canterbury, Connecticut, he had the benefit only of the local district school. There, at least, he learned how to read the few children's books available—volumes with such discouraging titles as *A Compendious History of the World, from the Creation to the Dissolution of the Roman Republic—Compiled for the Use of the Young*, although a lighter item bore the label *A Letter from Jackie Curious in London, to His Mama*, and there was also *An Account of the Seven Wonders of the World*. Explorations into these served him well by stimulating a desire for something better. Between chores, therefore, in the spring of 1809, he attacked Roman and Greek authors under the direction of his pastor.

That summer, after haying, he was pursuing the ancients further with the Reverend Mr. Nott, in the near-by town of Franklin, when the minister's brother, Eliphalet Nott, President of Union College, visited the place. That eminent educator encouraged the young man to go to college, and started him thinking about it seriously. Then, one Sabbath between church services, he happened to hear that Professor Kingsley of Yale was sojourning at Scotland, a town only three miles away. This bit of news drove



Zedekiah to a decision. Then nineteen years of age, he had studied the classics thoroughly for only twenty-six weeks. Yet here, in the person of Professor Kingsley, loomed his opportunity. He seized it.

He speedily put his books into a portmanteau, covered the three miles to Scotland, and asked the gentleman to examine him for entrance to Yale. The kindly professor, who knew a good boy when he saw one, was willing. Barstow made no mistakes in Latin or Greek; and, since he had already mastered the required mathematics and "English branches," his performance was generally creditable. The fact that he had not yet studied all the specific books required was a defect easily remedied. Professor Kingsley merely assigned him certain passages to prepare during the three and one-half weeks which remained before college opened, promising to try him at the end of that period and, if he did well, admit him. Zedekiah leaped that final hurdle easily. Whereupon he surprised his father with the news of what he had accomplished, and won parental permission to go to New Haven. There was no other red tape to unravel. Without further ado, he joined his class, and soon proved such a promising classical scholar that Professor Silliman, who had the care of a number of southern students admitted on probation, turned over several of these to Barstow for tutoring. It helped him to pay his way, and of course, though he was only a freshman, teaching was much the best way to learn.<sup>1</sup> Probably modern College Board examinations bother boys of his quality no more seriously.

According to the official college law, Barstow had to prove to Kingsley his ability to read, translate, and parse Tully, Virgil, and the Greek Testament. He also had to write "true Latin prose," demonstrate familiarity with the rules of "Vulgar Arithmetic," and present satisfactory evidence of a "blameless life and conversation." The last two requirements should have caused no serious difficulty; the classics constituted the big obstacle. But in New England almost any local clergyman could pound enough into a receptive boy to enable him to decipher a few pages of Tully, Virgil, and the Greek Testament. Dwight somewhat intensified a candidate's troubles by also requiring Clark's or Mair's introduction to the making of Latin, selections from Cicero's Orations,

Sallust, and the *Collectanea Graeca Minora* (an anthology of "the best" Hellenic authors). No doubt, all this appeared sufficiently formidable to a quaking freshman. Well might he regard it as an event of a lifetime when he convinced the examining tutors that he was capable of climbing the peaks of higher learning.

Possession of the requisite literary attainments did not at once entitle him to full standing. One other crucial test awaited him. During the first weeks of residence in New Haven, he had to establish "a fair character for correct moral deportment and application to study," before his name entered the matriculation book. While this period of probationary scrutiny lasted, his anxious parents, with or without notification, might expect him home at any moment. If all went well, he was formally registered. On that solemn occasion he had to sign a written promise, on his "Faith and Honor," to observe all the laws and regulations of the college, pledging himself particularly to avoid "profane language, gaming, and all indecent disorderly behavior and disrespectful conduct to the Faculty." With this regrettable commitment on his conscience, he, at last, gained official recognition as a member of the college. Dwight introduced this system of matriculation, and thought it "efficacious and salutary."<sup>2</sup> He certainly knew how to make it so.

Once firmly established, the freshman found a practical, as well as scholarly, value in a knowledge of the ancient Roman tongue. From the medieval universities, Latin still survived at Yale as the dialect for certain official academic intercourse. By Dwight's time its use seems to have become limited to occasions of special gravity. When, at the close of prayers in Chapel, the President pronounced the ominous words "Sedete omnes," his audience knew that they were about to hear some important announcement, probably of a disciplinary nature. When a freshman offered a flimsy excuse for an absence, a stern "Ratio non sufficit" made him realize that he should have thought of a better one. Latin also remained the language of some disputations.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, in his enthusiasm to see the country develop a native literature of its own, Dwight placed new emphasis upon the vernacular. While he admitted the traditional importance of the classics, he, as has been seen, was not content with a static curriculum. He put life into every feature of it, old as well as new.

The college laws bound him to provide instruction in "the three learned Languages, the Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the whole course of Academic Literature." For freshmen this meant a closer acquaintance with authors they had already met, plus a few additions. They studied:

*Collectanea Graeca Minora*  
Homer's *Iliad*, six books  
Livy, the first five books  
Cicero *De Oratore*  
Adam's *Roman Antiquities*  
Morse's *Geography*, Volume I  
Webber's *Mathematics*, Volume I

The class was split into two divisions, each being assigned to its own tutor who instructed it in all the above subjects (in many cases while he himself was studying law or theology). Since matters remained on a relatively simple scale, he commonly carried the same group through their second and third years. There was little variation in the fields covered, and the demand for pedagogical specialization was only beginning to be felt. It took time and money to answer that need adequately.

Usually to the same tutor, therefore, sophomores recited:

Horace  
*Collectanea Graeca Majora*, Volume I  
Morse's *Geography*, Volume II  
Webber's *Mathematics*, Volume II  
Euclid's *Elements*  
English Grammar (Lindley Murray's was the text)  
Tytler's *Elements of History*

This took care of the requirement in the college laws that second-year students be taught Geography, the "elements of Chronology and History," Algebra, and Plane Geometry. From this, they advanced, in their junior year, to:

Tacitus (History)  
*Collectanea Graeca Majora*, Volume II  
William Enfield's *Natural Philosophy*  
Enfield's *Astronomy*  
Chemistry  
Vince's *Fluxions*



And, if they lived up to the laws, English Grammar, Trigonometry, Navigation, Surveying, and "other branches of the Mathematics" were not neglected.

The three younger classes continued in two divisions, each reciting to its tutor three times a day on four days a week, and twice on the two remaining days. All students, regardless of class, were required, in daily rotation, to "exhibit" compositions of various kinds, and submit them to the instructor's criticism. About four at a time, they declaimed, publicly and privately, on Tuesdays and Fridays, in English, Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, as directed; and, whenever required, each had to hand in a copy of his declamation "fairly written." Seniors and juniors also disputed forensically before the class, twice a week, on a question approved by the instructor; when the disputants had fired their bolts, the instructor discussed the matter "at length," giving his own views of the problem and of the arguments used by both sides. Dwight considered it "an exercise, not inferior in its advantages to any other"; and one student assured his parents that all these disputes and compositions required "a great deal of hard thinking and close application." Others probably felt the same way about it.<sup>4</sup>

While the tutors performed most of this spadework, the professors provided the ripened wisdom of specialists. To make certain that the students missed none of it, each was required to attend lectures armed with a notebook in which to record the principal points which the professor attempted to drive home. At every meeting all were tested as to their understanding of the preceding lecture. Dwight regarded this device as a triumphant sample of the educational ingenuity to be found in America, particularly at New Haven. Intimating a certain superiority to an effete Old World, he pointed to it saying, "This responsibility, so far as I am informed, is rarely a part of an European system of Education." Perhaps it helped turn Americans into a nation of note takers. In addition to these daily quizzes, all the students in the seminary were "publicly" examined twice a year in their several studies. Those discovered to be deficient were liable to "degradation" to a lower class or dismissal. A very laborious fortnight was devoted to this gruesome business. It was the midyear and final

examination crisis familiar to succeeding generations of undergraduates.<sup>5</sup>

As Professor of Divinity, Dwight read no public lectures properly so called; instead he presented his theological ideas in a series of one hundred and sixty sermons, one every Sabbath, during the forty-week term, over a period of four years, the whole forming a very complete system. In addition, he talked to the seniors on the subject informally once every week. Since chapel was, of course, compulsory for all classes, there was plenty of theology; but, with Dwight in the pulpit, not many students yearned to escape it.

The Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy went through a course of "Philosophical" experiments every year, delivering three lectures a week—one to the juniors and two to the seniors. These delved into such complicated matters as optics, spherics, and dialing. One student, Samuel F. B. Morse, who later turned his talents to inventing the telegraph, considered the first "in some degree hard, but interesting," the second "very hard," and the third apparently beyond specific comment. Most exciting of all, to him, were Mr. Day's "very interesting" lectures on electricity; and, in a letter, Morse reported: "He has given us some fine experiments, the whole class taking hold of hands, form the circuit of communication, & we all received the shock apparently at the same moment. I never took an electric shock before; it felt as if some person had struck me a slight blow across the arms. Mr. Day has delivered two lectures on the subject, & I believe there are two more remaining. I will give you an account of them as soon as they are delivered."

Electricity in the form of galvanic batteries also crept into the chemical lectures of Mr. Silliman, who delivered one hundred and twenty of these every year to the two upper classes, so that each heard a complete course twice. Young Morse reported to his parents that the part on the earths was correctly reputed "very dry." Regarding chemistry as a whole, however, he agreed with the prevailing undergraduate opinion, acknowledging himself "very much pleased" with it because it was "amusing" as well as "instructive," and there were "many very beautiful and surprising experi-

ments performed, which are likewise very useful." He became so enthusiastic that he asked parental permission to buy gun barrels, retorts, and "a chemical trough" with which to perform experiments at home, assuring his mother and father that they would find his feats "entertaining." With many other college bills to pay, they probably did not encourage him in such enterprises. But his ardor was of a kind to justify Dwight's pride in the chemistry department.

The President derived much satisfaction from explaining that the laboratory was "a room peculiarly convenient" for the purpose because the audience could see every experiment "commenced and completed" before them, which would be impractical in the conventional lecture room. He did not hesitate to let the world know that "Chemistry is taught here with all the modern improvements. The Apparatus is ample; and the establishment superiour, it is believed, to any thing of the kind on this Continent." Silliman kept the quality of the instruction on the same level, and found time to deliver a weekly lecture, in season during the summer term, on Botany and Natural History. He also gave a private course of lectures on Mineralogy.

The Professor of Law spread enlightenment on the Law of Nature, the American Constitution, and the Jurisprudence of Connecticut in his thirty-six lectures every two years. Finally, the busy Professor of Languages and Ecclesiastical History performed his miscellaneous duties valiantly, even managing to get around to a "complete course of Lectures" on the history of the church from the earliest period to date. This was a rather unexpected fulfillment of the functions implied in his elaborate title. More notable, perhaps, was Professor Kingsley's introduction of Homer, in the original, as a regular feature of the curriculum. The only Greek then taught was the New Testament. Kingsley suggested using the *Iliad* as a text, too. Dwight objected on the ground that, as Greek was recited on Monday, it would tempt the students to study Homer on the Sabbath. Kingsley argued in reply that it was as wrong to study Greek on Sunday in one book as in another, even though one happened to be the Bible itself. It was a nice point, and Dwight finally yielded only so far as to allow Kingsley to hear any persons



recite Homer who chose to do so. Sabbatarian reasons compelled that poet to enter Yale slowly. But Dwight had no idlers on his faculty. He set the pace himself, and it was fast.<sup>6</sup>

In that early era a college president's task was not so simple as today. Now he merely has to run the institution with the money he raises; then he also had to teach. After remaining in two divisions under separate tutors for three years, the members of each class came together in their final year at the feet of the President himself. Dwight made this the climax of a career at Yale. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors looked forward to the time when, as privileged seniors, they would be under his direct supervision. They then enjoyed the advantage of lectures from the professors as well; but it was from Dwight that they expected the most valuable instruction. He never disappointed them. Alumni looked back upon the hours spent in his classroom as a permanently inspiring experience.

After the Lyceum was built, he met the seniors as a body in the "Theological Chamber," a large room at the west end of the second story. When he entered, a respectful silence automatically prevailed, and all remained standing until he was seated. His pupils felt a certain inevitable awe in his presence. They saw in him, not the schoolmaster there to rule by rod and rote, but a gentleman of exceptional distinction; a patriot who had marched with the heroes of the American Revolution; a divine, whom many considered the country's leading churchman; a poet and man of letters who from youth had been recognized for brilliantly diversified literary talents; a person who mingled with the world, accustomed to counseling those high in the state and nation. Here was no pedantic recluse.

He was the sort who is noticed in any company. His person was large and commanding; his voice, deep and melodious; his manners, refined and courtly, reminiscent of the sage of Mount Vernon himself; and his way, that of one long accustomed to authority. There was no loss of dignity when, on the coldest winter days, he would take a seat facing the fireplace at the north end of the Theological Chamber and, with his back to the students and feet to the fire, hold those young gentlemen willing listeners, from the ringing of the bell at eleven o'clock until it called them to dinner at one.

This was double the normal lecture period; yet no prodding was needed to induce attendance. Indolent youths, hitherto habitually apathetic to what Yale offered them, now came to class promptly, eager to catch every word. Benjamin Silliman, who was both a pupil and a colleague, paid tribute to Dwight's skill as a teacher by saying, "As an instructor, we can never hope to see him surpassed, it will be well indeed if he be ever equalled."<sup>7</sup>

For seniors about to venture into the world, the college laws prescribed Rhetoric, Ethics, Logic, Metaphysics, and the History of Civil Society.<sup>8</sup> All happened to be subjects in which Dwight delighted. He started with Rhetoric, using Blair's lectures as a text. He devoted the first half-hour of the recitation to a discussion of whatever questions the assignment raised, examining "freely" Mr. Blair's principles. He did not hesitate to disagree with an author; but he always explained why, taking care to show the proper respect due to the opinions of others, especially eminent writers. He encouraged his pupils in the same practice, urging them to independence of mind even if it led them to dissent from his own views. When they did dare to differ with him, he made them give good reasons.

This sometimes happened. On a particularly memorable occasion, the provocative question "Is dancing a useful employment?" had aroused fiery discussion. Instead of answering with an unqualified negative, the Reverend Dr. Dwight took an unexpectedly conciliatory attitude toward the problem. He went so far as to concede that some balls might be countenanced if they were properly conducted and confined to a select party. This radical opinion from so high an authority alarmed one of his more earnest pupils, who, fearing its potentially subversive moral effects upon the college, proceeded, courteously but firmly, to take issue with the President. This young man refused to compromise with sin. He denounced all dancing unequivocally, climaxing his condemnation of it with a decisive argument. He asked the President point-blank if he could offer the petition in the Lord's prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," and then, rising from his knees, say anything to the youth of that academic community which might encourage them in their fondness for the frivolities of the ballroom, that scene of "delusive charms" and vicious dangers! Could the President of

Yale direct his pupils themselves to offer that prayer, and then tell them that they could with safety and innocence lead in the dance? Dwight saw his position shattered, but was overjoyed at meeting an opponent of this mettle. The two became lifelong friends. But such interruptions were rare.<sup>9</sup>

Dwight filled most of the two-hour period with "a familiar extemporaneous lecture" on whatever subject happened to be before them. He enlivened it with anecdotes and illustrations, taken largely from his own experience and interspersed with dignified humor. One pupil testified:

During most of the time he was leisurely speaking, he either combated or confirmed & illustrated the sentiments of these authors by such a number and variety of well chosen facts, some selected from the most common occurrences, some drawn from extensive reading and acquaintance with mankind, & all delivered in such a stream of rapid eloquence, urged by argument, pointed with ridicule, & enlivened by anecdote, as astonished & delighted the audience. If the degree of eloquence is to be measured by the effects, he was frequently more eloquent on such occasions than perhaps ever in delivering his written discourses.

When he had finished Rhetoric, he turned for a certain number of weeks to Logic and Metaphysics. In his hands, the driest parts became miraculously interesting. Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* was the usual basis for discussion, and the students liked it. Then came Ethics, with Paley's *Moral Philosophy* for a guide. Recitations in these three "courses" came three times a week, and, at each, certain members of the class "exhibited" written compositions. On Saturday they recited Vincent's *Exposition of the Shorter Catechism*. This required only a few minutes, and Dwight followed it with a theological lecture on the doctrines, duties, and evidence of Christianity. Having begun his catechetical teaching auspiciously at the age of four, he never gave it up. At the close of this rather full Saturday morning session, he also heard declamations. On the other two working days of the week he presided over forensic disputations. This was the "severest," and most stimulating, exercise of all.<sup>10</sup>

Sometimes they did it extemporaneously but usually eight or ten students read "disputes" on questions the President had previously



approved. The topics ranged the whole gamut of human problems, the following being typical:

Ought capital punishments ever to be inflicted?

Ought Foreign Immigration to be encouraged?

Does the Mind always Think?

Which have the greatest influence in forming a National Character—Moral or Physical Causes?

Is a Lie ever justifiable?

Ought Anonymous Publications to be suppressed?

Ought Religious Tests to be required of Civil Officers?

Are all mankind descended from one pair?

Ought Representatives to be bound by the will of their Constituents?

Is a Savage State preferable to a Civilized?

Do Spectres appear?

Does Temptation diminish the turpitude of a Crime?

Is Privateering justifiable?

Is man advancing to a state of Perfectibility? <sup>11</sup>

When the subject before them was peculiarly provocative the students entered the classroom after prolonged preparation. Young Silliman became so stirred over the question, "Whether the mental abilities of the females are equal to those of the males," that he worked one evening until ten-thirty (which was late when you had to leave your bed at five in the morning), and all the next forenoon, on an affirmative answer. He believed that the apparent difference between the feminine and masculine mind "is owing entirely to neglect of the education of females, which is a shame to man, and ought to be remedied." The problem "was warmly contested at the eleven o'clock recitation, and decided in favor of the females, after a debate of more than two hours." <sup>12</sup> Thus his effort was not wasted. These were matters which started a man thinking—even the most sluggish.

During the debate Dwight sometimes interjected pertinent remarks, and after the students had finished their arguments he gave his own. This might take thirty minutes or several recitations, according to the importance of the topic. The majority of the class brought notebooks to record even his most casual comments. Whatever the question, he examined it from all angles, and, by close reasoning, found an unhesitating answer. It was often evident that he came to the debates with no special preparation; but

there was no need. He seemed to have thought it all out long before; if not, he did so on the spot, rendering an equally wise decision. Naturally systematic, his inability to use his eyes compelled him to index everything in the well arranged files of his mind, so that he could bring out what he needed whenever he wanted it. A pupil later said of him: "I had only to start a question, and he would answer: firstly, secondly, thirdly, fourthly, and fifthly, as though he had never studied any other subject."<sup>13</sup> To a tired schoolteacher who had been over the ground year in and year out, the business might well have become boring. Not so with Dwight; no matter how often he had heard a class dispute the same question, if it involved some vital truth which he thought this group should see clearly, he kindled to it as warmly and eloquently as to an important public address.

Into the discussions he packed much practical instruction on life itself. Never content merely to hear pupils recite lessons learned the night before, he let them off, at the beginning of the hour, with a few questions which they could usually answer by a simple affirmative or negative. Youths not inclined to overstudy might escape lightly because the "recitations" were really lectures. But Dwight made the seniors appreciate their opportunity. His object was not to feed them more textbooks, but, as they grew from boys into men, to fit them for the world they were about to enter. He talked to them like an earnest parent, giving them, out of his wide experience and observation, the counsel and warnings he thought they would find helpful. Able as his instructions were in the prescribed "courses," it was when he handed down decisions at "disputations" that he displayed his greatest gifts as a teacher. It was then that he exercised his most lasting influence. His pupils found their sum of knowledge daily increased; their ethical standards formed and strengthened; their literary, political, and religious principles shaped, often for life. Many, in later years, remarked that scarcely a day passed when they did not remember something he had said.

During the last century and a quarter Yale's curriculum has changed continually and profoundly. Two contemporary comments further indicate its value in President Dwight's time. When Jared Sparks went from Exeter Academy to Harvard, some of his school friends chose Yale. They compared experiences, and one

who seems to have kept a balanced judgment found at New Haven many reasons to be satisfied with his decision to seek an education there. In 1811 he reported to Sparks that a comparison of the two institutions, which "hold the first rank in the United States," showed that there were certainly more professors at Cambridge. But those at Yale, he thought, were, on the whole, superior "in point of talent," especially when one balanced in the scales the respective Presidents, and the Professors of Philosophy and of Languages.

Furthermore, the President and faculty at New Haven were "perfectly united in their sentiments, with regard to Politics and Religion," which were "very nearly the same with those of Calvin and Washington." Whether or not one agreed with this point of view, at least there was harmony; whereas, we know, Harvard had been torn for years by the Unitarian tumult, not to mention politics. Cambridge perhaps studied more Greek and then had the preference in Anatomy, since a Medical Department had not yet been established at Yale when Sparks received this letter. But, in his correspondent's opinion, Yale was far ahead in Chemistry; and "for elegance and style in English composition" Dr. Dwight called Professor Kingsley "the Addison of America!" Sparks' friend had no doubt that the "scholars" at Yale enjoyed "a decided superiority" over those at Cambridge in "Philosophy" and Mathematics; while few men anywhere, he thought, could compare with President Dwight "as a private citizen, a polite gentleman, a general scholar, a historian, an extemporaneous lecturer, a politician, or divine." A final circumstance may be cited in favor of Yale. Though Sparks, alas, had gone to Harvard, Dwight found him his first job.<sup>14</sup>

And this, by a Yale graduate of 1803 but written in 1864, views the situation from a different perspective: <sup>15</sup>

But the course of college learning at that time,—do you know how meagre it was? As though we had come fresh from the common school, we were put back into our grammar, geography, and the common learning, and kept in them a great part of the first two years, so that at their close we had scarcely advanced farther than is now requisite for admission. And then what poor barren things our grammars, lexicons, & text-books then were, compared with such as are now fur-



nished! And our teachers were as scantily furnished as our books, with stores of knowledge that are now prepared for the acquisition of the earnestly studious mind. I wonder that any of us came out men, or ever became such. And yet we were fully employed, and on such things as were put into our hands we were kept hard at work. Though we were perhaps half a year on Morse's two huge volumes of geography, we were required to recite the whole of them, and our memories, if no other faculties, were severely tasked. We were required to review our studies again and again, and to be very exact in our recitations. Every mistake was marked, and the account, we were told, was preserved. And it may be less important, in the process of education, what is the subject of thought and study, than the thought itself, the habit of study, the power of concentrating the mind on whatever may come before it.

According to the standard of the time, one found the best at Dwight's Yale.

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Students hungry enough for intellectual nourishment to seek it in the college library had a struggle to satisfy their cravings. Dwight opened new opportunities for them; but in that quarter, too, he had to begin almost at scratch. When he took office in 1795, the library was one of the weakest departments. It then numbered approximately twenty-seven hundred volumes (it stores over two million today). Most disheartening was the fact that "no supply of any consequence" had been added since Dean Berkeley's donation sixty-two years before. His generous gift of one thousand volumes in 1733 still constituted more than one-third of the library's total, in both quantity and value. Consequently, Dwight found the college in possession of a collection of "ancient books," valuable in its way but "nearly useless" for up-to-date educational purposes, since it was "almost totally destitute of modern authors."<sup>16</sup>

A month after his inauguration he promptly signed a petition letting the state legislature know about this sad state of affairs. The memorial included the persuasive information that when, a few years back, fire had consumed the Harvard library, the Massachusetts General Assembly had presented that seminary with a new one, which, including additions from private donors, currently contained thirteen thousand volumes—more than four times as many as the Yale library. This touched the pride of Connecticut's

sensitive legislature, and, as has been seen, that body came generously to the rescue of the college's finances. It estimated £900 as necessary to add "modern authors," but several years elapsed before the money became available.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, the Prudential Committee authorized the President to order from Europe whatever books might be purchased from the income of Dr. Lockwood's legacy. They trusted Dwight's judgment to select works of a correct character, and requested him to procure "a box or boxes of decent workmanship and proper construction" to receive the books so added.<sup>18</sup> This indicates the modest expectations which Dr. Lockwood's bequest permitted, and, as usual, it required patience to achieve improvement on a large scale. Events in Europe during Bonaparte's rise to power brought such alarming advances in freight and insurance rates, as well as in the price of books themselves, that the President and Fellows delayed making sizable purchases abroad until 1805, when they dispatched Silliman upon his errand.<sup>19</sup> They then acquired two thousand volumes. In 1807 Oliver Wolcott swelled the permanent library fund with a gift of \$2,000, permitting further acquisitions. In conveying the college's gratitude, Dwight told the donor: "The aid you have given us is a prop to a weak part of our building essential to the symmetry and usefulness of the whole structure. In no other manner could the same benefaction have been equally useful."<sup>20</sup>

Being well aware of the library's importance to the college, Dwight persevered in his effort to make it worthy of first rank. The Corporation, too, showed steady interest, busying itself with such details as binding worn volumes and cataloguing, in addition to the major matter of "replenishing" the shelves and boxes. They bought a lightning rod for the new building which housed the library, and paid Professor Kingsley and Tutor Sereno E. Dwight two dollars a day for their services in "arranging" the library and preparing a catalogue for the press.<sup>21</sup> While it never caught up with Harvard in numbers, the Yale library doubled in size during Dwight's administration, growing to seven thousand volumes. This must have given him real satisfaction; and it was something for him to be able to say, "Few libraries are probably more valuable in proportion to their size."<sup>22</sup>

It was probably because the library constituted its most precious treasure that the authorities guarded it so carefully. They surrounded it with regulations fitted to arouse curiosity as to its contents but otherwise hardly designed to stimulate student patronage. To protect the sacred precincts, the Prudential Committee blocked the doorway with a sturdy bar "to preclude those who apply for books from entering the room."<sup>23</sup> Only two persons held keys to that portal: the librarian, who would certainly have been handicapped without one; and the President, whose official position made him keeper of all college keys. Two instruments, thus independently held, seem a sensible precaution, lest disaster overtake one. There was more danger that the librarian might lose his than wear it out, since the Laws of 1795 required him to "attend upon the business" of his office twice a week, and no oftener. After the library had begun to acquire gems in larger quantities, the authorities thought better of this and, in 1808, laid down the dictum that the library was to be open on Thursday afternoons only, from two o'clock to three, at which time the librarian might loan books only to persons properly qualified.

These included trustees, faculty, and resident graduates; but, among the undergraduates, only juniors and seniors had "liberty" to borrow books. They could take no more than three, once a fortnight. Faculty enjoyed special consideration, being allowed to ask the librarian to wait upon them at any time, and to take certain books of great value which were prohibited to others. But no one entered the library legally unless accompanied by the librarian, whose duty it was to "enter down in a bill" the title and size of every book borrowed, the name of the borrower, the time when the latter committed the act, and the joyous moment when he made redemption. If the borrower permitted the book to leave his personal possession or loaned it to another, the loss, for one year, of his privilege to borrow might teach him not to repeat the offense. The same penalty applied to students guilty of carrying a volume out of New Haven, as they were required to return all books the week before vacation.

Nor was the library a free proposition. It cost Masters, Bachelors, and undergraduates nine cents a month for each folio; six cents for a quarto; and three for an octavo or lesser volume. If they



could be satisfied with a pamphlet, they escaped for a penny. In the middle of Dwight's administration these rates were boosted to twelve cents for folios, eight for quartos, and six for octavos and anything smaller. It was the physical size of the volume which counted, except in the case of books which were "recited"; these, following the law of supply and demand, cost double. Folios might be retained two months (could mere carrying weight have been the reason?), whereas others had to be returned within one month. He who broke this rule had to pay double for every month the book was overdue. Failure to surrender it within six months made him liable for the price of the book or, if it belonged to a set, for the value of the entire set. Later, double the value of the book, or set, was imposed upon such offenders.

Borrowers were, of course, responsible for damage done to any book in their possession, assessment being made by the President or librarian. No candidate could obtain a degree without a certificate from the librarian acquitting him of responsibilities to the library. The librarian accounted annually to the President and Fellows for moneys paid to him, and the sums were spent in repairing old books, buying new ones, or in any other way beneficial to the library, at the President's discretion. Ancient custom prescribed that the Senior Tutor should also be librarian, but after 1805 Professor James L. Kingsley held the post. Its duties never occupied more than a part of his time.<sup>24</sup>

Eager students, whom so many restrictions hampered, found some relief in the private libraries of the two principal societies, the Linonian and the Brothers in Unity. These were literary organizations which went in for debates, orations, "narrations," dialogues, and other accepted media for stimulating a taste for belles lettres. Each year on the anniversary of the society's founding the members exhibited to the public the talent which such training developed. Early in the college year, the two societies divided the freshman class, each taking half. The rivalry was friendly, and there was little choice from the freshman's point of view. One excited new member, assigned to the Brothers in Unity, explained to his parents that the meetings were held once a week but the exercises were secret, so that he was not at liberty to divulge their nature. He could only assure them that prevailing opinion consid-

ered the society "to be as advantageous as any one thing in College towards the attainment of knowledge."<sup>25</sup> If true, the society is not to be confused with a modern fraternity.

For one who took it seriously, the society's greatest advantage was probably its library. Dwight himself had been one of the original contributors, in 1769, who started the Linonian collection, and by 1809 both societies had accumulated about seven hundred volumes each. The members of each society enjoyed the privilege of borrowing books from the library of the other, so that they had access to about fourteen hundred volumes. Otherwise, first- and second-year students would have read almost no other books than those recited in the classroom, being excluded from the college library. The society libraries grew gradually during these years, and perhaps a sense of ownership persuaded many to use them.

Occasionally, too, the President ordered Isaac Beers to allow certain specified freshmen and sophomores, as well as juniors and seniors, to take books from his store, and charge them to the college; but this must have been for special students and purposes.<sup>26</sup> Certainly the average undergraduate was not swamped with the endless arrays of formidable bibliographies which face even defenseless freshmen today. When he did break into the college library, or discover a classic on the shelves of his society, or win a Presidential order on the bookstore, he may well have seized the opportunity more appreciatively than if books had been continually getting in his way.

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The President then had no Dean to bear the burden of administering discipline, and so the "government" of the college, too, fell upon Dwight's shoulders. It was a vexing business, but he excelled at it. By his own peculiar methods he produced far more satisfactory results than any of his predecessors. In 1795 he found the institution under the same laws which had prevailed since the middle of the century, when President Clap had compiled a code. Based upon the statutes of English universities, that digest gloried in the sanction of the "immemorial prescription of Europe." This gave it a feudal flavor. Printing it in Latin strengthened the medieval tang, until the colony's curious legislators intimated a prefer-

ence for Anglo-Saxon vernacular. Thenceforth the laws appeared in English, that none might plead an excuse for confusing right and wrong. With the instinct of a Justinian, President Clap had also committed to writing the customs of the college. These had acquired the force of law and, although not printed, were read and explained with impressive gravity to the students.

A rigid body of statutory and common law, therefore, bound the life of the academic community. Clap had imposed fines and enforced the police power with a strict Calvinistic fervor that was rewarded with riot and disorder. Those troubles dated from Dwight's own undergraduate days. At the close of his freshman year the three lower classes had been suspended for two months, charged with "ill-treating" the President, breaking tutors' windows, and "threatening their lives."<sup>27</sup> Dwight, remembering those rebellions, now, a generation later, found the same disciplinary system in force.

In regulating relations between the "authority" and the students, as well as between the higher and lower classes, it vitalized minutiae to a degree truly impressive. A solemn prohibition, for example, forbade undergraduates to wear hats within five rods (82½ feet) of a tutor's person, within eight rods of a professor, or within ten of the President, which meant that they had to uncover almost as soon as they saw that supreme dignitary, or at least as soon as he spied them. President Stiles was one of the kindest of men, but he always expected the students thus reverently to doff their beavers, in rain or snow, summer or winter, before approaching the Presidential presence. Abetted by the costume of the day, he himself assumed an austerity of manner calculated to intensify the solemnity of the occasion and thereby assure respect for Majesty. All "scholars" were bound by law to show these proper tokens of veneration and obedience to the college officers. Transgressors guilty of "reviling or reproachful language," or "any kind of contempt of their persons, or authority," might be punished by fine or other censure, even to expulsion, as the "aggravations" of the crime required.<sup>28</sup>

Statutes, officially laid down by the Corporation itself, made it the duty of the senior class "to inspect the manners" of the lower classes, especially the freshmen, and to instruct them in "that grace-



ful and decent behaviour toward superiours, which politeness and a just and reasonable subordination require.”<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, early each year, the senior and freshman classes assembled, facing each other in parallel lines, in the gallery of the Chapel, where one senior, selected for dignity and “weight of character,” enlightened the newcomers upon what was expected of them. Socially, they learned, a freshman was never to attempt “familiarity” with upper-classmen unless invited. When he ventured out of his room, he was to appear “completely dressed, and with his hat.” Yet, he might not wear the latter adornment in the college yard, except in stormy weather, or when necessity obliged him to carry other objects in his hands. Under any circumstances he was to keep it off while conversing with “superiours” until bidden to put it on again. Before passing through a gate or door he was to survey all approaches and, if he saw a superior within three rods, wait for a signal to proceed. On a stairway, likewise, he was to give way, leaving the more convenient banister side for his betters. Upon entering the chamber of an upper-classman, he was to refrain from speaking until he was spoken to, and was then to reply “modestly” and go promptly on being dismissed. He was never to remain seated in the presence of the exalted, but was to rise whenever an upper-classman entered or left a room. He was not to run in the yard or on stairways, or call through a window. Out of study time he was to perform “all reasonable errands” for any superior, being made responsible for damage to anything thus entrusted to him. Upper-classmen were not supposed to abuse this privilege, but freshmen soon discovered that their errands had a way of mixing the vexatious with the insulting.

Sophomores, particularly, were adept at finding excuses for “trimming” a freshman who had inadvertently committed some “crime” against “decency and good order.” Summoning their victim “with a stamp & a step up to my Room,” a dozen “good Voices” assembled to administer discipline. “He entering trembles & is decomposed & ’tis ten to one commits a greater offence than the other, —perhaps he forgets to make a bow, then they all fetch a stamp, asking him what he meant to enter so without bowing,—if he bows to one, the rest are affronted & ask him if he likes that one better than all the rest—if he bows in an awkward manner they take great

pains to shew him—keeping him bowing for half an hour almost to the floor. If he is obstinate they put the fists in his face, keep him constantly turning around to see those that are behind him—blow tobacco smoke in his face, make him hold a candle, toe a crack, bow to his shadow & when his back is turned they are continually going in and out to trim him for not bowing—two or three talking to him at once while he all passive obedience & non-resistance is obliged to stand mute & answer only to the questions they ask him.” A junior confessed to his diary that once when in the midst of giving a freshman orders for an errand, “an unlucky thought popping into my head, I was wholly unable to preserve my gravity. However, Scranton took the business out of my hands and sent him.” Freshmen were literally hewers of wood and drawers of water for those who had come to college before them. Such, according to ancient usage and official law, was the serfdom of the innocent at Yale.<sup>30</sup>

Dwight determined upon a policy of emancipation. It was all as contrary to the spirit of the time as to his own preference. The American Revolution had presumably freed the country from tyranny, and since the French had started a commotion of their own the air reverberated with the rights of man. Even an occasional Freshman succumbed to the fever of rebellion. One, bolder than most, threatened to send a challenge to any person who gave him an errand, but weakened when put to the test.<sup>31</sup> In accord with the popular notions of liberty and independence, Dwight acted energetically.

During the summer of 1795, before his formal inauguration but in consultation with him, the Corporation undertook to revise the laws. Some one, doubtless Dwight, suggested abolishing the fagging system. Hearing what was in the wind, Professor Meigs and the three tutors submitted a written protest against such a radical step. Meigs was probably responsible for it, but since these four constituted the entire Faculty, and all signed the document, their opinion counted for something. They took a standpat attitude, insisting that a “proper subordination” in a college was “absolutely necessary.” They argued that a great part of the freshmen were “rude, from rude towns and families,” and, when suddenly set free from parental restraint, assumed a haughtiness and learned vices

which the few instructors on the Faculty were unable to moderate or suppress. The seniors, Meigs and the tutors felt, could do it much more effectively.

They prophesied dire results if subordination were abolished. In their opinion, it would subject the higher classes to "constant scurrility," lessen their manhood and dignity, and reduce all to "an equal rudeness." This would render the college a mere "great, common school," eventually throwing "an unreasonable burden" upon the Faculty and "degradation" upon the institution. Or, wealthy students would introduce servants, and those of lesser means would ruin themselves trying to keep up with the rich. The "economical and ingenious" would thereby be discouraged from attempting to acquire an education at all, and the seat of the Muses would degenerate into a "Court of Dissipation." The protesting Faculty assured the Corporation that freshmen, if freed from running errands, would spend the time thus gained in idleness and mischief, not in study or acquiring habits of reading and thinking. But they admitted that the sophomores did abuse their power over freshmen and, therefore, recommended that the privilege of sending freshmen on errands be limited to juniors and seniors, which would give the sophomore spirit of vengeance a year in which to cool. The seniors, they thought, should remain under the duty of inspecting the manners of the lower classes, especially the freshmen. Meigs and the tutors had their way; the Corporation embodied their recommendations in the new code of 1795.

Dwight did not get rid of the old regulations for another nine years. That, however, did not prevent him from enforcing them in his own way. The college laws allowed a certain latitude in imposing punishments "as the nature and circumstances of the case" required; and, when cases occurred which were not covered by the laws, Article XXIII of Chapter VIII, On Crimes and Misdemeanors, conveniently empowered the President, professors, and tutors to proceed at their discretion. Under this authority, Dwight made the "government" of the college as new as if every statute had been altered.<sup>32</sup>

He based his system on experience and common sense. At the age of six, he himself had willfully insisted upon studying Latin; but his father, abandoning compulsion as useless, had controlled



the situation by guiding him. That was a valuable precedent. Again, after Dwight had wasted the first two years of his own undergraduate career, a friendly tutor had patiently and kindly shown him the mistake he was making, putting him back on the road to achievement. There was a never to be forgotten lesson in that, and as a tutor he himself had reclaimed James Hillhouse in the same way. When, at the age of nineteen, Dwight had entered diffidently upon his tutorship, he faced an acute discipline problem, teaching pupils of his own age and older. His father then wrote him this sound advice:

The task of government requires more care and prudence than the young (or even the greater part of the Aged) are commonly possessed of. I hope for your age, with the two years experience of a School with the variety of tempers and dispositions you there had to direct (tho' less ripen'd than your present), you may make at least a Tolerable hand of it. The Scholars generally expect and desire to be treated as men, though many are but boys, and I have reason to think, from my own experience as well as observation, that a little private Study advice and counsel will influence Some headstrong tempers more than all the Pecuniary or disgraceful penalties that have yet been invented or inflicted. It was a most happy part of President Burr's methods, than whom no one ever enjoyed a happier genius or form of it.<sup>33</sup>

This was the technique Dwight developed so successfully at his own school in Northampton and at Greenfield Hill. Now as President of Yale he followed the same strategy.

He managed the college community as he did his own family. Force was the instrument of despotism; he would have none of it. Persuasion was his method, as, he said, it should be of any free and rational government. To make it effective, Dwight realized the necessity of inspiring mutual confidence between rulers and ruled. The latter must be assured that their leaders have the knowledge to discern, and the virtue to aim at, the general good. Rulers must feel that their subjects can and will recognize the wisdom and equity of their policies and measures. Only then would those in authority work most effectively for the public welfare, and receive wholehearted support. Dwight felt this to be true of a family, community, or nation. He practiced it at Yale, and advocated it for state and country.<sup>34</sup>

The secret of his success lay in the fact that his was a sway of influence, not coercion. He ruled without making it apparent. He treated the students as gentlemen, demanding no other marks of respect than those which gentlemen naturally render one another. He democratically abolished distinctions between the classes, no longer recognizing any superiority of one over another. Notably, he freed the freshmen from their servility, although it was not until 1804 that he brought the Corporation around to prohibiting officially the time-honored system of fagging.<sup>35</sup>

Long before he could convince the Corporation, he noticed that a fine of six cents for "hallooing," singing, loud talking, and "noisiness" did not bring quiet to the yard; nor did one of eight cents end the danger to college windows from hand- and foot-ball; nor did a thirty-four-cent penalty prevent incorrigible youths from slipping away, without permission, on hot summer days to go fishing, sailing, or even undressing for swimming in places exposed to public view. Rowdies who fired gunpowder in the yard, or near either the dwelling or the person of a Faculty member, knew detection would cost them fifty cents; yet, a few apparently thought it worth the price. Roués caught at a dancing assembly in New Haven during term time might have to sacrifice as great a sum; still, some ran the risk. Playing at billiards or "any other unlawful game," or at any game for a wager, or calling for strong drink within two miles of College, entailed a punishment of forty cents for the first offense, eighty cents for the second, and rustication, dismissal, or expulsion for the third. Those misdemeanors happened. When offenses were repeated frequently or "daringly," the Corporation authorized the President to double the ordinary fine, although it was never to exceed \$3.34. In lieu of a fine he might accept "an ingenuous public confession," except when the law demanded expulsion.<sup>36</sup> Through the decades of the eighteenth century these fines had been worked out with a precision worthy of the figures on a modern department store's sales tags; yet, each succeeding President had had the same crimes to combat.

Dwight was interested in prevention, not the penalty. If the offenses were not committed, there would be no need of fines—which hurt chiefly the parents. He substituted private admonition, remonstrance, persuasion, and parental counsel. From long experi-

ence and close observation Dwight had acquired an almost instinctive knowledge of the feelings which actuate young men, and a consummate skill in managing them. When a parent placed a child under his care, he felt it to be his duty to take the parent's place and to treat the pupil as he would his own children. Indeed he felt the same genuine solicitude for the pupil's welfare, and exercised the same forbearance toward his follies.

He pursued the gentle course as long as there seemed to be any hope of reclaiming the delinquent. When mildness failed, he turned on the pressure, addressing the offender with cogent arguments founded on appeals to his own good, his conscience, his honor, his affection for his parents, his ambition, hopes, and fears—all in terms which the stoutest heart rarely resisted. Members of the Faculty present at these admonitions trembled with sympathy while the confounded culprit shook like a leaf at the terror of his rebuke. Tears of sorrow and penitence flowed from many a softened offender whose reformation dated from that interview. In an exceptional case in which Dwight's efforts were unavailing, he promptly notified the parent; then, if their combined efforts still accomplished nothing, the offender was privately informed that his connection with Yale had ceased. Dwight applied this policy energetically to freshmen, with the result that by the end of the year the class was relieved of the chronically idle and vicious.<sup>37</sup>

He tried sincerely to save all sinners, especially young ones. Those who proved hopelessly averse to academic pursuits, he helped into other, more congenial, fields of endeavor, preserving them from open disgrace and restoring them to hope and usefulness. He encouraged all students, whether errant or not, to come to him for advice and aid in their difficulties. At such times they forgot Dwight the pedagogue and thought of him as friend and father, which indeed he was. Entering into their interests and feelings, he won them by kind helpfulness. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to rescue from despair seniors who were about to face the world with no visible means of support except God's blessing and their own efforts. By willing and active exertion in their behalf, he secured employment for many, particularly those who wished to teach or enter the ministry. His interest did not cease with their graduation. To others in more affluent circumstances he gave good



advice, discussing their plan of life, leading them to form high moral standards, and teaching them to aim at eminence in whatever they did. This was what Dwight called the "parental" system of discipline.<sup>38</sup>

It brought rewards in many ways. Fines became unnecessary, and Dwight inflicted none as punishment. Rules for removing hats became obsolete because respect was rendered voluntarily. Relations between Faculty and students became largely those of older and younger friends. Public punishments were few because Dwight resorted to them only in the most flagrant instances. He much preferred to be able to tell his friend, Jedidiah Morse: "Our college is quiet, studious and happy. We have not punished a single student during the present year."<sup>39</sup> By invoking the law with such rare discretion, he made it more of a preventive influence than ever before. Although he knew how to smash conspiracies before the plotters could carry them out, the tranquillity of the college rested upon the respect of the students for the government rather than upon the watchfulness of the officers. When disorder did break forth, it was a simple matter to restore peace.<sup>40</sup>

Two occasions of tumult in the chapel, one under Dwight and another under his predecessor, illustrate the difference in their technique. Stiles once brought a distinguished dignitary to evening prayers, but being late, found the students "in a row, stamping, etc., all over the chapel." He managed to reach the stage, where he tried in vain to quell the uproar. Unable to make himself heard, he resorted to striking the stage with his cane until he shattered the weapon to splinters. That proved a futile gesture, serving only to increase his own rage. A witness of this mortifying scene, reminiscing about it, remarked that Stiles was "of the old regime" and "liked the old college laws derived from the English universities." When freshmen complained to him about the oppression of the sophomores, he merely sent them back to face the enemy. For, said a former freshman, Stiles out of college could be the "politest, most urbane gentleman" he ever knew, being one thing as a man, "but as president quite another."<sup>41</sup>

Not so with Dwight. During his administration "a crackbrained, vagabond Hibernian" temporarily haunted the college grounds, claiming, among other things, to have graduated at Dublin Uni-

versity, and, in any case, willing to match Latin and wit with all comers. He found his way into the Chapel one evening when the President happened to be delayed. While they waited, some of the boys fell to chaffing the "tonguey vagrant." As was his wont, he countered with a Celtic nimbleness which proved provocative. Finding words, no matter how unsuitable to the place, incapable of sending a son of Dublin to cover, his adversaries resorted to more primitive methods. Some one hurled a hymnbook. Then other missiles at hand began to fly in all directions, and the fun grew fast and furious. As the impious turmoil achieved crescendo, Dr. Dwight entered. So thick was the air with battle that only those near the door noticed him; but suddenly all heard his familiar voice and beheld the majestic figure as he stood there, clasping, as usual, his hat upon his breast. The single, simple utterance, "Young gentlemen, this is the house of God!" at once brought the stillness of the grave. No other rebuke was needed. The President merely read the Scripture with more than customary solemnity and tenderness; only his voice, by its accents in prayer, seemed to plead, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." They understood.<sup>42</sup>

Certain situations sorely tried Dwight's talent. One habit which he could not persuade the students to renounce, was the traditional freshman-sophomore "push." This had been going on since time immemorial. "Much as when a new cow is put along with a herd of others," each year, after the freshmen came, the sophomores put the strangers to the test. Emerging from Chapel after evening prayers, the second-year men stopped on the porch and tried their strength at keeping the freshmen back. If they conducted the ceremony with the proper verve, individuals caught in the center found themselves raised high from the floor and had visions of being squeezed to death. The Faculty, convinced that the experience offered nothing beneficial, strove as strenuously to eliminate the rite. Sometimes by suspending two or three who had been "forward" in it, they broke it up for a year. But the effect was only temporary. The same mystic compulsion impelled successive classes to repeat the ritual—so strong is ancient custom.<sup>43</sup>

Of greater concern were the inevitable clashes between town and gown. Dwight might sway gentlemen's sons by talking to them

like a father, but it was something else to reef sailors who came careening, full sail, up from the harbor. When Jack joined his mates of the rabble ashore, their combined contempt for the educated seldom remained suppressed. More or less regularly it burst into violent hostility, with a really first-class crisis occurring every few years. That in the spring of 1811 began in the typical way. "A certain low set" of the town took primitive satisfaction in making insulting insinuations, comparing the fashionable young scholars to pigs, as they walked by, jostling them in the streets, and resorting to similar provocations. The beneficiaries of these attentions reacted quickly in a highly retaliatory spirit. After customary preliminaries had put both antagonists in a mood for war, the sailors and ruder sort of the town, to a considerable number, formed "a combination" to come up to the college and attack the inhabitants. Advance threats of the impending offensive reached the stronghold of learning, where the students, especially those who had been victims of the early clashes, were "very glad" to arm with clubs and put themselves in a posture of defense.

It was no disappointment when they saw, standing conveniently near the college fence, one of the foe, distinguished for his prominence in the preceding skirmishes. Some of "the most sanguine" students seized him for the pleasant purpose of putting him under the pump. Unfortunately, civil officers of the town, standing by, feared they might abuse the fellow and interfered in his behalf. This naturally produced "an opposition" from his captors who then came to blows with the representatives of law and order. One officer was "considerably wounded." The situation then rapidly progressed to the reading of the riot act; whereupon the academic forces dispersed. With appropriate speed the wheels of justice turned. Students and town "fellows" gave their stories to a Justice of the Peace who bound about ten from each side over to the county court. All together, the fun cost the students not far from a thousand dollars in fines and costs. Other affrays were less expensive, perhaps twenty-five dollars per participant.

Sometimes by taking the field themselves, President Dwight and the college authorities prevented serious developments. On the night of an expected attack they forbade the students to leave the yard, guarded the gates, patrolled the premises, and warned the



police to watch for unlawful acts on the part of the storming canaille. It was strenuous but worth while if peace prevailed. The students thought they could preserve themselves from future insults only by proving their mettle in regular fight. They, therefore, were eager to come to grips with the enemy whenever relaxed vigilance on the part of their guards presented an opportunity. But, if Dwight and the Faculty had their way, there were fewer fines, suspensions, and expulsions.

One who had been through it all, felt that under Dwight's guidance Yale handled these matters, on the whole, more effectively than some of her sister colleges. When Harvard and Yale both faced the problem the same term, a whole class had to be suspended at Cambridge, whereas Yale did not lose a single student. At Williams, where the village was small, students, on occasion, dared not leave their rooms after dark. However, there were moments in New Haven when the antagonism spared professors no more than their pupils. During Silliman's days as a tutor, while he resided at the college, a town mob once sent a shower of clubs and stones against his windows, staving them in and exposing him to real danger. Animosity, in fact, ran so high that he never walked out in the evening, during a whole summer, without carrying loaded pistols. In the later years of Dwight's administration, the feeling was not quite so uncompromising, and a warlike outburst was usually followed by quiet until "a new race" came upon the scene. Then it was enough to try the Presidential patience.<sup>44</sup>

Of course, the students themselves were not always angels. In 1802 Tutor Moses Stuart reported the "convulsions" of the quarter to Silliman, who was temporarily safe in Philadelphia. One student had been rusticated for rolling barrels down Mr. Stuart's own stairs; Sophomore So-and-so had received the "darts of Dr. Dwight's quiver, until they were exhausted, for cutting bell-ropes and blasphemy, but without any harm"; Freshman So-and-so had been suspended for "crimes of almost every nature." Mr. Stuart had been further "honored by a broadside at one of my windows, which popped off without ceremony six squares of glass. No matter; you were honored in the same way." Mr. Fowler's door had been almost split to pieces with stones. The whole sad state of affairs forced Stuart to conclude, "In short, there appear to be

more devils in college at present than were cast out of Mary Magdalene." <sup>45</sup>

It was no easy time to keep high spirits under control. With Napoleon on the warpath abroad and Jefferson fighting the Federalists at home, the world was boiling politically. "High notions of freedom and personal independence" prevailed among all ages. A spirit of insubordination seized the young, especially, and in institutions of higher learning their first impulse seemed to be resistance to established authority. Most colleges experienced "scenes of riot and insurrection" involving the entire student body. In 1802, fire mysteriously destroyed the college at Princeton. President Smith convinced himself it was the work of incendiaries who had been demoralized by those "jacobinic," antireligious principles which he said were "tearing the bands of society asunder." <sup>46</sup> At Yale, that same year, there was a religious revival.

Three years later Harvard fought her way through another "Bread and Butter Rebellion," suspending half the students in a famous row over Commons food. At New Haven no instance of such general opposition to lawful authority occurred during Dwight's entire presidency. There were usually from two to three hundred students, diverse characters collected from almost every state in the Union, and yet not a single "interruption to the regular operation of the law" marred the record. Dwight's administration represented a successful experiment, conducted over a period of two decades, with a "scheme of Government" which he called "singular." On his deathbed the only wish which he expressed concerning the college was the hope that his successors would continue it. If Dwight was not the progenitor of the fatherly Dean, later beloved in many American colleges, he set one of the earliest influential examples in that direction. <sup>47</sup>

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It was an active world which Dwight governed so benignly. Freshmen, lacking the immunizing vaccine of twentieth century sophistication, entered it usually with only a verbal forewarning of its dangers. Like his colleagues, the Reverend John Elliot of East Guilford, Connecticut, who drilled Latin into many boys preparing for Yale, tried also to make them ready for the pitfalls of the

life awaiting them there. With an earnestness full of foreboding, he urged them not to be found in the "scandalous tricks and plots which are a disgrace to human nature; but, on the side of order and sobriety." As final advice before they left the security of his study, he reminded them solemnly of the supreme importance of always being a friend of virtue, and pointedly expressed the wish that he and they might meet "in a better world hereafter." Such intimations of the tempting perils ahead must have made youths bound for Yale all the more eager to discover for themselves the ways of that institution.

Entrance examinations presented the first opportunity. Full of anticipation, the candidates journeyed to New Haven for the ordeal, held annually on the day before Commencement. Lasting sometimes from nine o'clock in the morning until two in the afternoon, it provided a sobering introduction to the presiding tutors and professors. Successful survivors, feeling that they now belonged there, might well take lodgings overnight to permit a leisurely inspection of the college and the town. Next day they could witness the Commencement proceedings, the ceremonies which would crown the four glorious years before them.<sup>48</sup>

With the start of the new term six weeks later, life began in earnest. Upon arriving in town the immediately pressing problem was that of finding a room. One young man, whose experience was probably typical, hurriedly inquired where to apply, and "was informed 'to the President unquestionably' with a supercilious look." Obeying this suggestion, he was "shown into the audience room where after hearing a discourse upon vegetable and animalculine putrefaction was asked our business and directed to Tutor Atwater, who showed us a room which we accepted and moved our furniture into it."<sup>49</sup>

The Morse boys from Charlestown, Massachusetts, enjoyed the advantage of having a father who was Dr. Dwight's intimate friend. They, therefore, spent their first night at the house of the President himself. The great man took such an interest in their welfare that he was not above recommending a lady to do their mending, a matter, even in that day, not officially presidential responsibility. Their father took care of other details, as he had come to New Haven to see them settled. Having satisfied himself that their



roommates were "serious, pious and studious lads," he purchased essential items for their rooms: secondhand Windsor chairs at four shillings each, a mirror, andirons, bellows, a washbasin, and a load of good wood. Such was the equipment which freshmen needed to make them comfortable in the pursuit of Cicero, the Greek Testament, and whatever Yale had in store for them.<sup>50</sup>

It was no loafer's paradise. In the winter the daily grind began punctually at five-thirty, when, no matter how bleak the morning, the bell pulled the slumbering scholars from bed. When thermometers were low, it was a brisk time of day to throw off the blankets, build a fire, and go plowing, pitcher in hand, through snow for water. That was a procedure well designed to awaken the drowsiest. Some, doubtless, thought it scarcely worth the trouble. They had only thirty minutes in which to prepare for worship in an unheated chapel. One victim of this discipline found it "cold, cold, cold work" to go to prayers by moonlight in the December dawn. During the summer the college compelled him to do it even earlier; but rising at five o'clock on a June morning was less odious. He called it "disagreeable to my laziness but beneficial to my health," crediting it with enabling him to study with more pleasure and profit, preventing headaches, and giving "a degree of animation" which he never felt when guilty of sleeping late.<sup>51</sup> Not many modern undergraduates would agree with such a perverted point of view.

After shivering through chapel, the class recited, by candlelight, the lesson they had supposedly prepared the preceding evening. They were not rewarded with breakfast (toast and coffee, perhaps with a dish of oysters) until eight o'clock, by which time they ought to have been ready for roast beef. At nine the bell sent them back to their rooms to study for another recitation at eleven o'clock. Higher-classmen might squeeze in a lecture at twelve, but dinner at one permitted relaxation. The respite was brief since they had to be ready to recite again at four, and during study periods a tutor, sniffing the scent of indolence, might at any moment open the door, on regular tour of inspection. Evening prayers were conducted by the President (other faculty members officiated in the morning, but they could hardly begrudge him the privilege of the evening hour). Supper did not end the day. There were still

idiomatic constructions to unravel before the morrow's session at sunrise. "Thus," a student testified, "are we driven from post and pillar, and find no rest for the soles of our feet." It was small comfort to find that Algebra was easy, Chemistry fun if one did not blow himself up, and Homer's Iliad, in the original, "laborious but interesting," especially when the author mentioned a lady because then it was exciting to turn the leaves of the lexicon to discover the fair one's name, the color of her eyes, and other similar details in which Homer seemed to be "very particular."<sup>52</sup>

After two months of this regimen, another freshman reported to his father:

The more I become acquainted with this institution, the greater I find the advantages of it, and the more am I pleased with it. The freshman class has during the present term studied through Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War, which is a Latin Book about the size of a testament. . . . Our lessons are sufficient to employ the greatest part of the class from 6 o'clock in the morning till 10 at night; excepting the time taken up by prayers, meals, and recitations, and perhaps two hours, during the day for recreation. We are obliged to study so much as we can, without injuring our health. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, however, we are more at liberty, there being but 2 recitations on those days.<sup>53</sup>

To fit anything extra, whether private reading or deviltry, into the schedule taxed the energy of any seriously minded youth. Samuel Finley Breese Morse somehow managed it, but begged parental forgiveness for not writing letters and answering their questions. His time, he said, plausibly, was entirely taken up with his studies. Perhaps he did not exaggerate, for in addition to the above prescribed schedule, he was studying French privately from one Monsieur Value to whom he recited twice a day, at noon and again at seven in the evening. From the latter session he returned to his room at nine, and studied for the next day's classes until ten, eleven, and sometimes twelve o'clock, when, he confessed, he was ready to sleep. He concluded: "You see now I have enough to do, my hands as full as can be, not five minutes time to take recreation. I am determined to study, and thus far, have not missed a single word."<sup>54</sup>

Despite all this earnestness, Samuel's French brought him further difficulty. When he discovered that Mr. Beers' bookstore was willing to part with an eight-volume, duodecimo set of Montaigne's *Essays*, handsomely bound in calf and gilt, for only two dollars, it seemed an opportunity. He knew what "wicked and bad books" they were for anybody to read; but that was not his intention. He bought them only because they were cheap, and at once exchanged them for "a handsome English edition of *Gil Blas*; price \$4.50." It was purely a business matter, and, being an even trade, the Charlestown pastor's son thought it a neat deal.

His father, a punctilious Calvinist around whom the winds of Bostonian orthodoxy whirled at hurricane speed, looked upon this swapping of evil for good with a more mature judgment. He rejoiced at the boy's resolution not to cause his parents pain by idleness or expense, but pointed out that the young man still had to learn the value of property, specifically of books. There was, in the first place, no reason for buying a pocket Bible when the paternal clerical library afforded plenty of "very neat ones." And it was "very wrong" in him to purchase Montaigne's books merely because they were cheap. They were decidedly "unfit" for his use, financially as well as ethically, and great was his father's joy that he had parted with them. However, the elder Morse considered the *Gil Blas* phase of the transaction also unsound because the book was available in the library of the society to which Samuel belonged, and he therefore had no need to acquire it. Paternal orders were to get rid of it without delay but with the least possible pecuniary loss. "Let there be no more traffic of this kind. Your time can be better employed," said his father. But when Samuel explained that this particular edition of *Gil Blas* was in French and he wanted it for linguistic purposes, he was allowed to keep it, being reminded to cover all his books and to treat them with care. He also received permission to buy a bookcase and desk for twelve dollars, provided he kept it in good shape and sold it for cost. With two other sons going through Yale at the same time, a large family to maintain at home, and "constantly a house full of company," the Reverend Dr. Morse had to guard his small ministerial salary with prudent economy.<sup>55</sup>

Filial expenses at college in that day placed the inevitable burden



upon paternal pocketbooks, but a modern father would gasp in disbelieving wonder at the size of Yale's official bills. Those unpleasant documents arrived quarterly until 1809, when the Corporation became content to collect three times a year. Nevertheless, the college still wanted the money promptly, charging interest if it was not paid within a fortnight, and excluding the student from classes unless he furnished a satisfactory reason for the delay. All were compelled to furnish bond, as today, but if Yale was a stern creditor her charges were then reasonable enough. The laws of 1795 required the payment of four dollars per quarter for tuition; fifty cents for a "chamber" in old Connecticut Hall; one dollar for more up-to-date accommodations in the new Union Hall; sixty cents for "ordinary repairs and other contingent charges"; thirty-three cents for sweeping and making beds; plus whatever might be assessed for broken glass and other customary damages. Seniors found another dollar added to their final bill for the triennial printing of the college catalogue, and two dollars for the Commencement dinner. In 1807 the Corporation lifted tuition to six dollars per quarter, and before the end of Dwight's administration it soared to thirty-three dollars a year.

Even that was hardly exorbitant, as it included instruction from the professors (who sold no tickets for undergraduate lectures) as well as the ordinary course. After Connecticut Hall had been renovated and Union Hall had lost its original freshness, room rent was equalized at seventy-five cents a quarter or three dollars a year, regardless of the dormitory; but in 1809 it jumped to six dollars a year. The Treasurer also demanded fees for wood and candles (used in recitation rooms as well as in students' quarters), making his bill usually between ten and fifteen dollars per quarter. The Steward's bill for board at Commons, being figured on a proportional basis, varied from one dollar and a half to two dollars a week, mounting once, toward the close of the War of 1812, to two dollars and fifty cents. Including board, the total college bill, therefore, generally ran from thirty-five to forty-five dollars per quarter.<sup>56</sup>

But, then as now, it was not uncommon for parents to learn that their son's current expenses had been larger than he himself had anticipated. This might be surprising information in view of the amount they had last sent him; and attempts to account for it

merely made the mystery more inexplicable. As an aid to parents, the college took the wise precaution of requiring all students from out of town to have an approved resident of New Haven authorized to guard their purses. Despite this salutary check upon irresponsible youth, their letters home sounded the age-old tune. Laundry for a whole quarter might run as high as three dollars or more, and washerwomen have always been notorious for a disagreeable way of wanting their pay. When a boy from afar stayed in New Haven during a vacation, it cost him seven or eight dollars for board, not to mention amusements into which idleness might lure him. Sooner or later undeniable necessity drove the most conscientious youth to purchase a pair of pantaloons. One who faced this desperate situation justified the expenditure on the ground that he had had no "thick trousers" for two years, and patching what was left of his old ones would be almost the same as making a new pair, in cost if not in fact. Having thus convinced himself, he bought some of a mixed cotton and wool cloth, "very fashionable and cheap and adapted to the season," for eight dollars, which seems high enough tribute to Fashion. But when shoes cost two dollars, and a waistcoat and pair of cambric neck handkerchiefs came to five, clothes were no inconsiderable item. Shortsightedness, caused no doubt by strenuous study, compelled this earnest lad to part with another three dollars for spectacles, that he might see the Professor's experiments and perform his duties as monitor, checking attendance at chapel.

As he planned to enter the ministry, he decided to spend an additional sum for lessons in Hebrew from a Mr. Horwitz whom he described as "a German" well acquainted with the language. While Yale's Professor of Languages, Mr. Kingsley, had acquired an enviable mastery of the grammar, he remained admittedly weak on the "true pronunciation." Mr. Horwitz, on the other hand, seems to have possessed a natural proficiency in that difficult phase of the subject. He offered his services during only one term, intending thereafter to be off conquering other unspecified regions. His modest charge of six dollars made the opportunity appear one which might never present itself again. A knowledge of Hebrew being "indispensably necessary in the profession of Divinity, and a useful accomplishment in any situation of life," it is to be hoped

that all parties found the contract beneficial. As this particular student notified his parents early one June that five or ten dollars would see him through until September, they could not accuse him of extravagance.<sup>57</sup>

Samuel Morse, who was always in hot water over money, had no trouble discovering ways of spending what his father sent him. He confessed:

I find it impossible to live in college without spending money. At one time a letter is to be paid for, then comes up a great tax from the class or society, which keeps me constantly running for money. When I have money in my hand I feel as though I had stolen it, & it is with the greatest pain that I part with it. I think every minute I shall receive a letter from home blaming me for not being more economical, & thus I am kept in distress all the time.<sup>58</sup>

His detailed list of expenditures during the entire previous term included:

Postage	\$2.05
Oysters	.50
Powder & shot	1.12 ½
Cakes etc. etc. etc. [a suspicious item]	1.75
Wine, Thanksgiving day	.20
Grinding axe	.08
Poor man	.14
Sharpening skates	.37 ½
Circulating library	.25
Lent never to be returned	.25

—items which, with others no more reprehensible, total fifteen dollars, a sum which would not carry many Yale undergraduates over a week end today. However, when Samuel indicated a desire to keep “brandy, wine, and segars” in his room for purposes of hospitality, his horrified mother laid down the law:

Pray is that the custom among the students? . . . There is no propriety at all in such boys as you having anything to do with anything of the kind, and your papa and myself positively forbid you the use of these things till we think them more necessary than we do at present.<sup>59</sup>

Fortunately the talent which later gained him distinction in art now came to his rescue. He relieved some of the economic pressure by making miniatures on ivory at five dollars each, and had no diffi-



culty securing orders for profiles at a dollar. He made a shrewd bargain with the college butler, by which, in return for taking that functionary's likeness, he squeezed seven dollars off one buttery bill.<sup>60</sup> Scholars with more commonplace aptitudes swelled thin purses by tutoring backward colleagues, or, if need be, by teaching the three R's for a time. Occasionally some youth of weaker clay stumbled into evil ways. One day in chapel, for example, President Dwight felt obliged to announce the expulsion of a senior "for theft and other misdemeanors"—an unfortunate incident which inspired "a long lecture on the danger of running into expense and extravagance." In strong terms he urged all his charges to keep a strict account of expenditures and scrutinize it monthly.

At least one member of his audience adopted the recommendation, henceforth recording every penny spent and, on the first Monday of each month, "reckoning" with himself on the merits of those expenditures. One month he admitted that a new pair of pantaloons, a bookcase, fruit, and a copy of President Dwight's *Oration* had not been absolutely necessary although they were "articles of convenience." On the other hand, a present of two dollars to the tutor, taxes (eighty-six cents), mending shoes (fifty cents) and lamp oil (twenty-nine and a half cents) were all "articles of necessity." Sometimes he discovered such questionable items as fifty cents for a lottery ticket, followed quickly by another fifty cents for wine "because we drew a prize"; twelve and a half cents for a brandy sling, fifty cents for port wine, and twelve and a half cents for "seeing a moose" (an "article of curiosity"). But for the most part his expenses were legitimate—wood, candles, lamp oil, shoe repairs, apples, and at appropriate intervals a new shirt or pair of overalls. Once he "gave away" eighteen and a half cents—apparently in Christian charity, for he found no fault with that account.<sup>61</sup> And so the money went!

When it went for board at \$1.78, more or less, per week, it was well invested, because this was a matter over which Dwight showed deep concern. How to feed a college without deficits, and keep everybody happy over it, has never been a question easily answered. Many confident academic administrators have come to grief over it. Plagued by a multitude of other cares, President Stiles had, in despair, kept the college dining hall closed during the last years

of his administration, allowing the students to eat and drink where, when, and what they would.<sup>62</sup> This method of handling the problem doubtless pleased the managers of local taverns, inns, and boarding houses, but Dwight considered it no solution at all.

Immediately upon taking office, he insisted that Commons be reopened as soon as possible; and he made attendance compulsory. Dwight was convinced that to keep the students together at meals where both they themselves and their diet could be properly supervised was a vitally important safeguard to morals as well as health. So strongly did he feel about it that, from the beginning, he took the attitude that he would rather not run the college at all, if he had to do it without the dining hall. Throughout the twenty-two years of his administration the Yale Commons functioned successfully. This is no minor item in the record of his achievement.

There were moments of stress inevitably; yet the situation never got out of hand. The Corporation put a Steward in charge, laying him under the solemn obligation to cause the tables to be "decently spread" and to "provide victuals, after the manner of living in common families," for all who resided in the college, faculty and students alike. Only "urgent reasons" might exempt an undergraduate. The Corporation advanced capital for the purchase of equipment and supplies. In agreement with the Steward, at the end of each quarter, they fixed the price of board according to the number of students and weeks involved, figuring interest on the "outsets" made for running expenses, compensation to the Steward, and "risque" of collection. In the beginning the Corporation granted the Steward an annual salary of £100, and ten years later, after the number of students had more than doubled, raised it to \$500. Following the establishment of the Medical School they gave him an additional \$400, with a four per cent commission, for his services in both institutions. It was a trying job, and he deserved to be well paid.<sup>63</sup>

The laws bound the scholars, on their part, to behave at meals "decently, abstaining from all rude and loud talking, and keeping their places, until thanks shall have been returned." Those caught in the nefarious business of carrying "furniture" or edibles from the hall without an official order became liable to penalties appropriate to the "aggravations of the offense." The President appointed

student waiters to whom the Steward allowed "a reasonable compensation." Many were "esteemed scholars," although their office carried an uneasy responsibility. The duties included reporting damage done to utensils at each meal, together with the names of the guilty, if known. The waiters themselves were accountable for the return of all utensils to the kitchen and held chargeable on their own quarter bills for damages sustained through their neglect. Every quarter the Steward "exhibited" a list of all losses to the President and Faculty, who levied these upon those responsible; and, if the guilty remained undiscovered, they charged it to all who were in the Hall when the damage was done. The students were arranged at tables according to classes. All sat on wooden benches, including the tutors who merely had a table to themselves on an elevated platform from which they could view the whole company. But to pay the proper respect to one's plate and watch two hundred and fifty boys at the same time was no task for an epicure.<sup>64</sup>

The first winter, things seem to have gone fairly smoothly. Not long after Commons had opened in the fall, the seniors, who were always inclined to feel their importance, petitioned the Steward to change their sugar, a matter capable of easy adjustment.<sup>65</sup> In January one of their number gave it as his opinion that the scholars had to date been "handsomely provided for, as much so as can be expected for such a numerous body." Only a few peevish murmurs were heard. One habitual grumbler, who turned out to be an invalid all his life and never married, growled that the butter was "not fit to grease waggon wheels," but others seldom supported his chronic complaints.<sup>66</sup> Yet, in July the three lower classes asked to be exempted from "living in Commons." The Corporation denied their petition but took steps to inquire into the state of affairs in search of "plans for improvement." Far from indicating any discouragement with the year's record, and yet with a practical recognition of the problem's thorny nature, they placed the Commons permanently under the jurisdiction of the Prudential Committee. Henceforth, that body was to take speedy cognizance of "any evils and suggest remedies."<sup>67</sup>

In later years they had to deal with none of the mass rioting and large-scale warlike operations which broke the peace of Har-



vard. Only the small, isolated skirmishes normally to be expected bothered them, as in the comparatively turbulent autumn of 1798. It started one Saturday late in October when "something of an uproar" occurred in the hall—perhaps caused by the favorite stunt of setting off squibs under the tables. But that had only the effect of producing a shorter grace than usual, a very hurried and simple "God bless us for Christ's sake, Amen." More serious doings came in November, when the sophomores and freshmen violated etiquette by rushing out of hall before the two upper classes. Upon being reminded of their station in academic life, they merely became more defiant, flagrantly repeating the offense. This brought a formal billet from the seniors warning them that the laws would be executed. The sophomores promptly ordered the message burned. Finally, one evening going to supper, they formed ranks on each side of the way, and, as the seniors passed by, hissed and hooted their elders in the rowdy manner of rebels. The real "drollery lay in one of the Tutors coming in among them before they knew it"; and being unable to make himself heard until the storm subsided, he then spoke with "some degree of temper" to the point that Yale men should not act like "clowns or sailors."

Despite his eloquence, a few days later Thanksgiving provided the occasion and instruments for another outburst. At meeting, President Dwight preached from Psalm 2:11, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." It was "a masterly sermon" but when dinner was finally served at half after three, his words were momentarily forgotten in the excitement of "roasted geese pyes and different kinds of sauce." As the "pyes" disappeared, the bones of the fowls began to fly "so that they darkened the room almost, untill thanks were returned." After dining thus gayly, one celebrant drank wine, attended prayers, and in the evening went to a "collection" of some of his class, where more wine was consumed. With the close of the day's observations, his "humor" grew inexplicably worse, but that was the extent of the harm accomplished.<sup>68</sup>

When serious trouble did develop, the cause appears to have been not bad food but the behavior of the cooks. What was more remarkable, it was then the students themselves, not the Faculty, who assumed the initiative as prosecutors. In the summer of 1801,

for the enlightenment of the President, a committee of the junior class drew up a remonstrance against the "conduct of those employed in the Hall." After thorough preparation, they held a four-hour "trial" one afternoon, examining sixteen witnesses to support eleven allegations against the offending cooks. The first charge was for stealing, the last for Sabbath breaking, and the intermediate ones for "various pieces of misconduct." Since propriety demanded that the examiners stand during the entire procedure, a participant whose diary provides the information, thought it more important to note that he was "excessively fatigued" than to mention the final outcome.<sup>69</sup> Justice must have been done effectively, for the affair was not repeated until 1807.

In September of that year, the Corporation, willing to leave no stone unturned in the cause of improvement, requested Professor Silliman to investigate, on the spot, Princeton's methods of managing her Commons. With a tone of hope, they instructed him to note "especially any measure by which the food is rendered satisfactory or expense prevented."<sup>70</sup> Whether the mission proved helpful, the records do not disclose. Certainly nothing could have been gained by visiting Cambridge. Anyway, in December, the Yale students took matters into their own hands again.

As in 1801, they arraigned the college cooks before a tribunal consisting of four students from each class. It took all Saturday afternoon to try two of the "worst cooks." These they found guilty of such charges as "being insolent to the students, not exerting themselves to cook clean for us, in concealing pies which belonged to the students, having suppers at midnight, & inviting all their neighbors & friends to sup with them at the expense of the students, and this not once in a while, but almost every night." The aroused victims of this gross dealing extorted from one culprit the confession that the cooks had been thus "neglectful" of the students' interests because there had been no disturbance in the college for seven years, and, since neither the students nor the authorities took notice of them, the cooks imagined they might escape detection. After arranging the charges in proper order the committee presented the indictment to President Dwight, who speedily summoned the "authorities." Together with the students they thrashed out the whole problem, devoting an entire afternoon to it and becoming

so busily engaged that they even omitted the four o'clock recitation. The judgment this time was that one cook be dismissed, two be retained on probation, and the others allowed to continue in their former standing.<sup>71</sup>

It is significant that the major dissatisfaction was not with the meals. Naturally during the three weeks of the crisis itself the students "lived extremely well." But an honest sophomore testified:

For my part, I think we have lived very well this term. The fault is not so much in the food as in the cooking, for our bill of fare has generally been in the following way: Chocolate, coffee, and hashed meat, every morning; at noon, various; roast beef twice a week, pudding three times, and turkeys and geese upon an average once a fortnight; baked beans occasionally; Christmas and other merry days, turkeys, pies, & puddings, many as we wish for; at night for supper we have chocolate & tea in general, pies once a week; I ought to have added that in future we are to have beefsteaks and toast twice a week; before this the cooks were too lazy to cook them.<sup>72</sup>

With beefsteak and toast ahead, how could any Commons row have been settled more happily? Princeton and Harvard might well have taken lessons from the way Dwight handled things at Yale.

The effects of this episode appear to have been lasting. Two years later a freshman informed his anxious parents, "Our commons are much better than I expected, & indeed as good as I want."<sup>73</sup> Another of Dwight's pupils, after nearly fifty years, remembered vividly that salt beef and dry cod were "perhaps the most usual dishes," and on Sunday mornings during the winter large tin milk cans filled with stewed oysters always graced the breakfast tables.<sup>74</sup> Landlubbers from the interior became as loyal to those oysters as the natives of the Connecticut shore themselves. Fresh veal stewed with a well made crust was another appetizing dish, but one of the greatest luxuries the country afforded was its rye bread, esteemed indispensable to health in the cold season. At the proper time of the year green peas occasionally appeared at dinner, and apples called "Seek-no-farthens" did not belie their name. One Sunday a student diarist noted as facts of equal importance that the weather was cold, the wind northwest, and they had milk for supper. Another time on Friday the Steward served



"roasted beef with sauce" which he apparently deemed of a quality worth remembering. Sometimes a general fast day deprived him of dinner, but that was not the college's fault. At a later date in the nation's progress, Lane Theological Seminary, in the fertile valley of the Ohio, boasted that it had never known the withering touch of that common students' curse—"dyspepsy." But under Dwight's watchful care, Yale escaped it too.<sup>75</sup>

Another of the President's irritations, a corollary to the Commons, was the college Buttery. Parched and hungry scholars whose appetites drove them to forage at odd hours sought appeasement at this fountain of refreshment. The law, indeed, forbade them to go elsewhere, public taverns being in disrepute with academic authorities striving to spare innocent youth temptation and expense. The Butler, therefore, enjoyed a strictly regulated monopoly of trade in certain goods. His franchise allowed him to sell cider, metheglin, "small and strong Beer," and such other "articles" as the President judged "necessary." Wine, distilled spirits, and "foreign fruits," not falling in that category, were prohibited. Any student who, despite this statutory hindrance, achieved intoxication "with strong drink," thereby qualified for an admonition, a sojourn at home, or abrupt dismissal. Although not obtainable at the Buttery, wine seems to have crept into student life in some mysterious but no doubt gentlemanly way. A senior whose conduct was beyond reproach noted the following evening's activity, and it must have happened to others:

In the beginning of the evening I went with a member of my class to look at the planet Jupiter through the large telescope from the Museum, which with his four moons we very easily discovered. I returned from the Museum, and had a call to go into Bacon's room, to help despatch some wine; which I very readily obeyed, and I presume acted my part faithfully. I then returned to my own room, where I found Lynde; and soon after him Strong. We drank a few glasses of wine, and had some sprightly conversation etc. They all returned about nine. . . . My time passes very agreeably.<sup>76</sup>

Probably to discourage loitering and overindulgence, the Buttery regulations ruled against consuming purchases on the premises, but the records do not reveal how effectively this proscription was

enforced. Books, stationery, pipes, tobacco, and assorted equipment essential for scholarly comfort, might also be had at the Buttery. Obviously, he who presided over it filled an important niche in the college's life.<sup>77</sup>

The Corporation, probably upon the President's recommendation, usually appointed a resident graduate of two or three years' standing. The post gave a deserving young man an opportunity to earn a little money while pursuing advanced study. Undergraduates were considered too irresponsible to hold the position, although the Butler might employ one as "waiter" to make deliveries and perform the duties of actual service. He himself had to answer directly to the President for the conduct of his office, submitting inventories of the goods he was selling and revealing his accounts with the students whenever called upon. The office changed hands every two or three years, with a formal induction ceremony on each occasion. The new incumbent was required to read publicly in the Chapel and deliver to the President "a writing" in which he acknowledged and declared that he accepted the office under the laws of the college and would conform to the same. If he then failed to do so, or neglected his office, he became liable to amercement, not exceeding twenty dollars, or removal.

The rules forbade him to sell any article for "ready money," or to allow customers to contract debts in excess of \$1.25 per month. Books used in recitations were excepted, and students who were of age or won parental permission in writing, might have credit up to \$2.50 but not a penny higher. The Butler made out his bills quarterly, subject to the approval of the President who had to sign them. To those not paid within a month, he was authorized to add interest charges. Of course, only articles legally marketable within the monopoly could appear on his quarter bills. Possibly there may once have been a Butler who succumbed to the lure of clandestine trade in contraband, but Dwight and the Corporation picked their appointees carefully. They could be fairly certain of characters made incorruptible by a religious revival. More than one student of divinity sped toward the ministry on the "small and strong Beer" he dispensed in the Buttery.<sup>78</sup>

For the prerogatives of this auxiliary benefice, he had to pay a certain price. The expense of supplying candles for the chapel was

his, as well as the duty of lighting them. On momentous occasions demanding special radiance, the Corporation relieved him of the burden. But a heavier, inescapable responsibility fell to him as ringer of the bell. Each morning and evening at the hour of prayer, he was to wait upon the President, or officiating officer, for orders to assemble the college community. He it was who daily sounded the familiar signal routing them all from bed, notifying them when meals were ready, hurrying them to lectures or study, and finally warning them back to their rooms with nine o'clock curfew. In a real sense he governed the cenobium.<sup>79</sup>

His reward, in 1795, amounted to 25 per cent of the net cost of the merchandise his salesmanship sent out of the Buttery. Lyman Beecher did very well at it. But he resorted to selling watermelons and cantaloupes on the Green in full view of the whole college; and he also slipped in a hogshead of porter from New York, obtained through an English parson who was a judge of the article. As a result of such stratagems, he paid off the \$300 he had borrowed to purchase the Butler's stock, wiped out \$100 worth of debts, bought a new suit of clothes, cleared Commencement expenses, and had \$100 in cash besides.<sup>80</sup> Beecher knew how to make the most of an opportunity.

In 1797 the Prudential Committee assumed responsibility for repairs to the quarters occupied by the dispensary, and bought from the Butler the "permanent improvements" which had customarily been transferred from one holder of the office to another. These fittings were far from elaborate, consisting chiefly of a partition, shelves, and cupboards in the cellarway, shelves in the gangway, a bedstead, and a counter covered with oilcloth. Altogether, including the nails which held the oilcloth down, the Prudential Committee appraised the equipment at \$28, for which sum the Butler stood charged with lawful interest annually while he remained in office. It was strictly a business proposition.<sup>81</sup>

While Dwight felt that good food at Commons, supplemented by carefully supervised odds and ends at the Buttery, constituted a vital safeguard to student health, he did not forget the importance of exercise. Facilities were not what they are today at Yale; he could provide no colosseum for athletic combat, no cathedral dedicated to gymnastics. The best he could do was to "lecture" the



scholars at evening prayers, reminding them of the nearness of death and giving them advice based upon his own bitter undergraduate experience. Still, this produced results. Sometimes the effect of his efforts had remarkable ramifications. Remembering what a starvation diet, overwork, and no exercise had done to him as a young man, Dwight painted a realistic picture of the ruin which might overtake any youth heedless of these things. His words of warning so impressed one innocent freshman that the boy resolved to walk six miles every day. The first effort carried him only half the distance, which was far enough to make him miss Chapel that evening. This was a sacrifice of spiritual to physical welfare, never condoned by the President. Rain definitely undermined the lad's resolution, and he decided to go only as far as he could in wet weather. The Sabbath being a day of rest, he also soon limited his Sunday evening quota to two miles. This amount of walking did little immediate good in his case; for, a few days after starting the schedule, he acquired a sore throat, on top of a very bad cold. As a cure, he covered up warmly in bed to "take a sweat." Although he "sweated very freely," the treatment proved otherwise disappointing, having "not much operation" upon him.

So, with Presidential consent, he retired to an uncle's home in East Guilford, near by, to try other remedies. Raking hay helped; but most effective of all seems to have been an afternoon "pleasure party in company with about 20 ladies and 10 gentlemen"—a delightful ratio from the masculine point of view. They proceeded to Tuxis Island in Long Island Sound, where they partook of "a plentiful repast, consisting of different kinds of tea, bread, butter, biscuit, pies, and cakes, furnished by the Ladies." At night the party joined "an agreeable ball," and the convalescent did not reach home until midnight. Another "agreeable teaparty" and a second ball completed his recuperation, but the first day back in New Haven he was very "melancholy." On another occasion, he "carelessly caught cold by sitting some time with my cravat off last night"; and again one afternoon he was seized with the "colic" because he had eaten "pretty heartily of stewed pye."<sup>82</sup> Dwight, obviously, placed a correct estimate upon the value of exercise as an antidote for overstudy and the other hazards of collegiate life.

Sawing wood, riding horseback, and football were other common forms of activity, but the busy schedule of study left little time for such matters. A senior told his father:

It is remarkable that the lives of all our class have hitherto been preserved. Notwithstanding that the employment of students is generally supposed to be so unhealthy, perhaps there cannot be found the same number of persons in this country, of any age, out of whose number, in the same time, there are so few deaths, as from the students in this college. It must be allowed, however, that many, while here, lay the foundation of diseases which terminate fatally in the course of a few years afterwards.<sup>83</sup>

Dwight, of course, wanted to reduce this danger to a minimum, and seems to have done surprisingly well. One spring when three seniors were taken ill with fever, he wrote to his friend Jedidiah Morse that, since the students were usually so healthy, this sudden outburst of sickness had made some "noise" among them. Normally he could happily report "health prevails universally." The most serious malady which appears to have struck Morse's own sons while at Yale was a mysterious affliction, distressing while it lasted but apparently minor. Dr. Morse must have been much relieved at the news that his boy was "now absolutely certain that he had gotten rid of the itch, for he has not itched for five days."<sup>84</sup> There were some things Dwight could not always control.

Vacations also aided the refreshment of mind and body. There were three annually, one of three weeks after the second Wednesday in January, another of the same length in May, and a long one of six weeks beginning in September, following the close of each academic year.<sup>85</sup> Like all college authorities, Dwight encountered the perennial demand on the part of eager students for permission to leave a little early or stay a little longer than regulations allowed. One who heard the President deliver "a lecture" at prayers on this "inconsiderate practice," testified that he "set it in a truly odious light."<sup>86</sup> Once away, most of his charges acted on the principle that "vacations were never made to study in." It was enough to be at home, seeing friends, conversing on such stimulating topics as the lawfulness of divorce and the relative merits of the professions, and perhaps dipping into literature lighter

than that so laboriously pursued in the classroom. One diarist indicated a successful evening when he merely "fluted some, talked some, laughed some, and finally did nothing at all." As President Dwight and his colleagues in authority did not feel obliged to include balls and dances in their institution's educational program, holidays afforded a precious opportunity to lavish a certain number of hours upon the ladies, if a Yale man proportioned his time justly. On the other hand, one scholar, after traveling three hundred miles to Vermont, apparently preferred to be inoculated for smallpox, and spent much of his autumn vacation in the pesthouse, counting four hundred and fifty pustules on his face at one time. He was late in returning to New Haven, but the President forgave him.<sup>87</sup>

As reckoned today, diversions were not many at college. A good fire always caused as much excitement as anything. When the bells rang out in the early morning hours, all Yale was in motion immediately, dressing quickly and rushing a mile and a half away, if need be, to witness whatever exertions the flames required. And watching a tallow chandler's shop burn at the water front was thrilling recreation between classes. But these were matters of chance, not routine. For the most part, one had to be satisfied with less stirring entertainment. Even on training day when a company of cadets and another of artillery put on a brilliant show, the regular eighty lines of Virgil had to be translated. Scholars so inclined might visit the General Assembly's meetings to see how the state achieved wise legislation, or the Courthouse to witness the trial of a murderer and hear the pleas of the county's best lawyers. Within the college itself, there were many gatherings. A statistically inclined senior counted during a single term eleven meetings of the Brothers in Unity, fourteen of the Musical Society, and six of Phi Beta Kappa. In addition, he attended eleven "praying meetings." Once he and a group of fellow students rode gayly out to Woodbridge in a sleigh to see a young minister ordained; but that sort of amusement appealed to a special minority.

Since college was in session through the summer, the students found much satisfaction in the proper observation of the Fourth of July, sharing the enthusiasm of New Haven's citizens. In 1798 it was done with "great pomp and splendor." At four o'clock in



the morning cannon and bells let the whole town know the day was at hand. Later there was a parade in which President Dwight, as one of the orators of the occasion, marched with the Governor's Guard, militia and artillery companies, the mayor and aldermen, sheriffs, deputies, clergymen, candidates, citizens, students, and a military company of boys. As the military opened on the right and left, the procession took seats in the Brick Church where President Dwight delivered an "excellent sermon." Noah Webster also treated the audience to more oratory, after which all adjourned to the Statehouse where a public dinner for about three hundred and fifty people was served, including "excellent liquors." With the drinking of toasts, "a most ardent spirit of patriotism appeared to diffuse itself through every rank and grade of society." Mr. Daniel Read, a loyal citizen, suffered for four days thereafter from "a hoarseness and cough," the consequence of his exertions to promote the singing.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the memorable day called for special celebration. To the firing of guns and ringing of bells, various groups in the city assembled to drink patriotic toasts. Parties of ladies and gentlemen went on board the *Neptune* and *Oneida*, India ships lying in the harbor, and the Cincinnati Society met in New Haven to applaud "a very patriotic and spirited" oration delivered by Theodore Dwight, the President's brother. About three o'clock that afternoon, "upwards of 100 members of this university" assembled in the hall where they drank no fewer than sixteen toasts to the discharge of cannon. When they came out, let it be whispered, many could hardly preserve an equilibrium, and the ceremony caused "a most terrible noise . . . on account of the fumes of the wine." Thus was the routine of prayers, meals, and study broken.<sup>88</sup>

\* \* \*

On the fatal third Wednesday in July, senior sophisters, sprinting toward their baccalaureates, faced the final hurdle of the race. The professors, tutors, and "other gentlemen" of liberal education commissioned for the purpose, "under the direction of the President," then examined the class on all that Yale had officially taught them. It was the last opportunity to prove their mastery of the

learned languages, the liberal arts and sciences, and the whole course of academic literature. At the close, the examiners, by individual vote, picked those worthy of being named Bachelors of Arts. They reported the results to the President who, in due course, conveyed the information to the Corporation for formal action. It was a grave proceeding which no one could take lightly.<sup>89</sup>

After convincing the examiners of their merit, the seniors were released from further recitations and allowed to spend the remaining weeks before Commencement, at home or elsewhere, making ready for the great occasion. Some, honored with parts in the exercises, had to prepare their pieces. All usually had clothes to buy. For an event of a lifetime, requiring a public appearance, ancient raiment would never do, as filial pleas to the family provider made clear. Unlucky fathers whose sons happened to graduate during the years of Mr. Madison's War of 1812, had special reason to lament that gentleman's foreign policy. New Haven prices were then worse than usual. A member of the class of 1813 complained that cloth was "extremely dear," blue more so than black; and only after a long search did he find a "barely decent" pattern at \$8.25 per yard, stuff no better than that obtainable a few years before for \$5.50. He assured his father that the poorest of the students in the class would go no lower, and most of them probably higher.

Other items added weight to his Commencement budget. A coat, waistcoat, and pantaloons, including trimmings and the making, would come to about thirty-eight dollars. Shoes would be \$2.50, and since it was "hardly decent" not to wear silk stockings on the stage at Commencement he had bought a pair for \$4. This price seems exorbitant even for the war era, but his defense is familiar—all the scholars were buying them in the conviction that their quality made them cheaper than those available at three dollars or three and a half. To offset this extravagance, he promised to endeavor to make his old hat serve "with a little fixing," although he had worn it more than a year. However, he urged his parents to be sure to make him a pair of cotton shirts, by Commencement, because, lacking any good ones, his need for these was desperate. In this typical way parents learned the final costs of educating a son at Yale.

A complete wardrobe was only part of the Commencement expense. There were also taxes for this and that—for “a treat given the Faculty at July examinations,” for music, for printing the triennial catalogue, for the Commencement dinner, and so on. The fee for a diploma, plus the cost of the parchment and blue ribbon, spoiled another ten dollars. Before any candidate could win possession of that proud document, he had to satisfy all college bills outstanding against him. It was well to allow six weeks or more for putting finances, as well as wardrobes, neatly in order. With that accomplished, the seniors reassembled at college on the Friday preceding the second Wednesday in September, ready for the celebration.<sup>90</sup>

Those were busy days for Dwight, too. He had to entertain old friends and guests, find jobs for the seniors, preside over meetings, and persuade the Corporation to do the business he wanted accomplished. As Professor of Divinity it was Dwight's important duty to deliver the annual baccalaureate sermon. This he did on the Sabbath preceding Commencement day, and he made it such a highlight of the whole proceedings that parents, alumni, and many others came to New Haven in time to hear it. In 1802 Jedidiah Morse found it “good to be there,” and wrote dutifully to his wife that the town was already full of people. “Multitudes” were still expected, but where they would procure lodgings he could not say, since the best houses had been engaged for weeks.<sup>91</sup>

Dwight always preached to a church “very much crowded,” sometimes filled with as many as seven or eight hundred people. However, he spoke not to the ladies and gentlemen drawn there by his reputation for eloquence, but to the young men who had been his pupils. It was, to him, ever a solemn, tender occasion, this parting with young friends. For four years he had watched over them, and this was his last opportunity to counsel them affectionately against the follies and vices of the world ahead. His final instruction must be so striking that it would always remain before them as a steadying guide. He, therefore, chose a text so forcibly appropriate that it might be long remembered, like the one he used in 1799 from I Corinthians 9:24: “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain!” Or that in 1801 from Proverbs 14:12: “There is a



way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

On the latter occasion he spoke in parable, relating a vivid story of "Lorenzo," a youth who came from a good New England family to "this university." Here the boy shone with considerable splendor among his fellow students, especially for his dress, gayety and sprightly wit. Unthinking, he fell into evil company whose applause pleased him. Adopting their ways, he played at cards, first for amusement, then for small stakes, which gradually grew larger, as did his losses. Slipping into worse practices, and eager to appear clever, he began to scoff at the founder of Christianity, the future judgment, heaven and hell, and religion in general. After graduation, when no longer drawn to church by compulsory rules, he neglected the Bible and the Sabbath. Neither the dying plea of a devoted father, nor the entreaties of an affectionate mother, won him from the wickedness into which Infidelity led him ever more deeply. Finally, having driven his mother to an early death, he lost his estate through neglect, and his health through dissipation. Hated by all decent people of the community, he sank toward a premature grave; and then, too late, he thought, with horror, of death and the eternal torments of hell, and wished he might live to repent. "Which of you, my young friends, would wish to be Lorenzo?" was the way Dwight concluded the graphic picture. And, in the afternoon, with more fervor, he preached a complementary discourse exhibiting the character of "Sophronius," a complete contrast to Lorenzo and a model for any youthful Christian to follow through life. The effect cannot be recaptured, but Dwight gave his departing pupils much to ponder after they had left his careful guardianship and faced alone the snares which overwhelmed Lorenzo. His parental counsel reached a climax in these baccalaureates, not soon forgotten, even in the excitement of Commencement.<sup>92</sup>

On Tuesday things began to happen. The Phi Beta Kappa society met at three o'clock, walking in procession from the Courthouse to the Brick Church, where they heard a picked orator. The Corporation met to vote degrees and transact any other business the President might put before them. They also joined the Faculty at dinner, which friendly custom Dwight introduced without arousing

mutual suspicion between the two bodies. In the evening the three younger classes had their part in the activities. "Not far from twenty" students from each group declaimed speeches selected, subject to Faculty approval, from ancient or modern authors. Judges awarded "honorary premiums" to three in each class whose performances they deemed best. After that, alumni walked the yard, renewing memories, and greeting old acquaintances. The laws attempted to keep things on a sedate plane by stipulating that there should be no parade, illumination or fireworks except by permission and under the direction of the President. This dampened no one's enthusiasm.<sup>93</sup>

The big day was Wednesday. Promptly at nine in the morning the procession formed before the Chapel door. Everybody had to be in the right place, and in 1796 the Corporation ruled that its own order should be the President, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the two senior clerical members of the board, the two senior Assistants, and so alternately until all the members were included. The senior class, the candidates for the Master's degree, the Faculty, and a numerous train of clergy and other gentlemen completed an impressive line. To the sound of band music, and under the conduct of no less a person than the county sheriff himself, they proceeded "circuitously" across the Green to the Brick meetinghouse, which guests and spectators filled to capacity.<sup>94</sup>

It was an imposing assemblage, one of the most important annual public gatherings in the state. While Governor Trumbull held office, that dignitary's presence gave special weight to the occasion. A gentleman-patriot of the old school, he still wore the three-cornered hat which had been used by officers of the Revolutionary army. Often it was surmounted with a handsome cockade, made of black satin ribbon elegantly and tastefully arranged, probably by the hand of a daughter. Breeches, and long boots with white tops, were other distinguishing features of his costume, and probably the richly mounted sword of his office, in its bright scabbard, hung upon his thigh. Spectators also frequently saw in the procession Dwight's old friend and army companion, Colonel David Humphreys, aide to General Washington and another of Connecticut's heroes.

But none of the great public figures overshadowed the President

of Yale, in dignity or commanding presence. It was he, indeed, who was first in the students' bows of homage; sometimes, as Colonel Humphreys limped by in the wake of the doctor, even he met scanty acknowledgment in comparison. The Governor took the seat of highest honor; Dwight used a tall-backed chair still at Yale after similar service to his grandson. Candidates for the baccalaureate often wore the triangular hat, cocked in military style. It was also the headgear favored by the President and most of the Faculty, until an accident, for which Dwight was innocently responsible, changed the fashion. One year, induced by his wonted kindness, Dwight loaned his three-cornered hat to an "ancient" clergyman, and never got it back. Thus the triangular emblem of presidential dignity disappeared from the Yale ceremonial and, so strong was the example, vanished from the country. The white bush wig survived to a later date, for the last honored and reverend head which it covered did not retire from the Corporation until the administration of Dwight's successor. With or without these adornments, Dwight took pride in Commencement, explaining to foreigners:

The respect, manifested to learning and science by the annual assembling of such a multitude of Gentlemen and Ladies, of the first consideration in the country, has the happiest influence, especially on the youth; who are taught in this manner, more effectually than they could be in any other, the high importance of their own pursuits in the view of those, whose opinions they of course regard with the utmost confidence and veneration.

To him it was another indication of the refined state of society to be found in Connecticut.<sup>95</sup>

Before a brilliant audience, therefore, excited seniors went through the traditional exercises. President Dwight started proceedings, appropriately, with prayer; then came sacred music. During these few moments of grace, the salutatorian's heart may well have pounded, for his turn came next. His oration was in Latin, but that was no help. In those days the professor of that language was not the only person present who understood the mystic words pronounced by the young scholar. That safely over,



he gave way to classmates who presented a series of "exhibitions." These included orations, in Latin and English, on such absorbing problems as "The Advantage of Poverty," and "The Importance of the Revolution in France"; dialogues, in which several student actors participated, to inculcate some memorable truth showing that "Friendship can be founded only in virtue," or "The folly of believing reports hastily & without examination"; there were also disputes on currently perplexing questions; and perhaps an outburst of poetry. All were compositions written by the students themselves. Since it had been part of their collegiate training to go through similar paces on "Quarter Days" and other occasions, the morning's program represented the supreme effort of practiced exhibitors.<sup>96</sup>

The Faculty selected the participants well in advance, choosing carefully those whose scholarship made them deserving of a place on the program. The undergraduates prized the honor as a public testimonial of intellectual superiority. To attain an "appointment" at all placed the recipient within the aristocracy of brains. Yet the American spirit of democracy failed to prevent them from valuing certain of these awards as more desirable than others. One fine scholar, apparently uncertain whether to be disappointed or not, informed his parents rather ruefully that he had received the Salutatory Latin oration while the Valedictory had gone to one "who can write English & speak better than I can." He hastened to add that he understood these two orations were considered on a level, and besides, in writing off the appointments, the President had put his name first on the list—a further consolation but not to be mentioned to any one!<sup>97</sup> It was a much more bitter pill for poor Richard Morse only to be included in a dialogue when So-and-so had been appointed to a dispute. His older brother Samuel, who had managed to graduate the previous year without any appointment at all, assured Richard that after being away from college for a short time it became clear that appointments were not worth a fig. Samuel had not hanged himself over the matter, and now promised solemnly never to think less of Richard for not winning a higher award.<sup>98</sup> Samuel F. B. Morse, in this and other matters, had exceptional vision.

On the other hand, those whom the awards pleased were wont

# Senatus Academicus

## COLLEGI YALENSIS

In Civitate Novæ Yorkæ Republicæ Connecticutensis.

Omnihus has Literas perlecturus S.P.D.

Vobis notum sit Quod C. ALEXANDRUM M. FISHER Gradus Primi  
Candidatum PRÆSES, conventumque SOCIUS Honorandus ac Reverendus,  
Dilecto Graduique Titulo liberalium Baccalaurei advenit et condecoravit, et ei  
privilegia dedit omnia jura Privilegia, Dignitates, Honores et Insignia, quæ  
hic aut uspiam gentium ad eundem Gradum Baccalaureum exstitisse cuncti solent.  
In cujus Rei Testimonium Literas hæc pullum EXCELSISSIMIS, Sigillum,  
et Præsides Autographum apponunt. Datum ex actibus academicis die  
primo Aprilis Anno Salutis millesimo octingentesimo nonagesimo C. & C.  
Cuiusque Independentie & Libertatis tricesimo octavo.

David Ely, ab Archivis.

Amos Dwyer,  
Profer.







to greet the news sometimes overjoyously. In 1805, doubtless after definite provocation, the Corporation forbade appointees to give "any treat of wine or spiritous liquors to his class or any part thereof for or on account of such appointment, or under color thereof," on penalty of admonition, rustication, or being denied the honors of the college, as to the Faculty might seem just, necessary, and proportional to the nature of the offense.<sup>99</sup> With Dwight to enforce it, the measure may have been effective.

When the last of these honored elect had entertained the Commencement audience, the exercises of the morning closed with another specimen of sacred music. That was not the end. At three o'clock in the afternoon the procession formed again, and things went much as before. This time, the Valedictorian pronounced his oration, and candidates for the Master's degree displayed their talent in more "exhibitions." To obtain the honor of a "second degree" the prime requirement (which was perhaps not so easily fulfilled as might appear) was the preservation of a good moral character for three successive years after receiving one's first degree. Any Bachelor of Arts who stuck it out had only to let the President know, before Commencement, of his desire to be made a Master, and the degree became his. After all, how could a young graduate who had refrained from disgracing himself for so long be better rewarded! His presence at Commencement should have been a stimulating example to the new crop of Bachelors to go and do likewise.

Finally, the President conferred the degrees, first, second, and honorary (prerequisites for the latter corresponded to those today, with possibly less emphasis upon the pecuniary); and he completed the celebration with a prayer. Whereupon the Bachelors had only to say farewells, pack belongings into a wagon or stage, and be off for home and the future.<sup>100</sup> In addition to a diploma, a favored few sometimes carried with them a precious certificate, written by President Dwight's own hand, like this one: <sup>101</sup>

These certify that Jonathan Law, A.B., of this seminary, & the Bearer of this, is a young Gentleman of unblemished character, of unrepachable behaviour, & of respectable literary attainments, & a member of the Church, in the same, in good standing. He is accordingly recom-

mended to the confidence & employment of his countrymen, & to the Communion of the Church by

TIMOTHY DWIGHT, *President*

YALE COLLEGE, Sept. 19th, 1803

Armed with such a recommendation from so high an authority, Jonathan, and the select company similarly honored, might well depart from the halls of Yale with greater confidence. Many entered upon careers which satisfied Dwight's most optimistic hopes for them.

## CHAPTER IX

### The Conquest of Infidelity

SPEAKING OF CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS, Yale's laws of 1795, Chapter VIII, Article I, ruled:

If any Scholar shall deny the Holy Scriptures, or any part thereof, to be of divine authority; or shall assert and endeavour to propagate among the Students any error or heresy subverting the foundations of the Christian religion, and shall persist therein, after admonition, he shall be dismissed.

A similar statute had long been on the books. To young scholars of spirit, in that Age of Reason, it had seemed an invitation.

When Dwight took charge that year, he found the college in what some described as "a most ungodly state," with "disorder, impiety, and wickedness" rampant. It was not a matter of a few mistaken notions as to doctrine, nor a suspicion of heresy here and there. The place was a hotbed of blatant Infidelity. Every up-to-date sophomore scoffed at the idea of divine revelation. Any Yale man worth his salt denounced organized religion and priestcraft as loudly as Voltaire had shouted down superstition and the infamous. It may have been contrary to the academic laws, but the foe, boring from within, had gained full possession. His ugly colors were flying high over Calvinism's proudest Connecticut fortress.

The recovery of that important citadel was the chief of the many tasks before the new President. Here, in a youthfully defiant form, was the enemy Dwight had already begun to fight at Greenfield Hill. The boom of his recent salvo, the *Discourse on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament*,<sup>1</sup> still reverberated up and down the Connecticut valley. It had required no unusual power of perception on the part of the Yale authorities



to recognize the author as the man to take command at New Haven. They quickly offered him the post, urging him to consider it "an important call of Divine Providence." Dwight accepted it as such, welcoming battle in a cause he made his own. He had complete confidence in his ability to accomplish the immediate objective. Once recaptured, Yale would be a strategic stronghold from which to direct the whole war along an ever widening front.

To Dwight it was not a local but a national problem, arising from conditions similar to those which had operated so perniciously during the years of his own undergraduate experience. Then it had been the Seven Years War which had brought armies to these shores, and British officers had been chiefly responsible for introducing disrespect for religion into America. Now the French had done it more effectively. For reasons of their own they had helped the United States win its struggle for independence. But in coming to our aid, they had brought the philosophy of men in rebellion against the teachings of the church.

This time, according to Dwight's analysis of the situation, Americans came into contact with the disciples of French *Philosophes* holding "that loose and undefined Atheism, which neither believes, nor disbelieves the existence of a God, and is perfectly indifferent whether he exists or not." Many, Dwight admitted, were men of polished manners, "improved minds, and superiour address," skilled in subtle means of persuasion. In a delicate and inoffensive manner they insinuated the "grossest sentiments" into polite conversation, putting arguments to flight with a sneer, and stifling conscience with a smile. These Frenchmen spoke with the authority of Old World culture, and since they came as friends and allies, risking life and fortune for the American cause, the simple colonists suspected only good from them.

Even New Englanders, not all but too many, accepted their ideas. Yankee soldiers were young, and, being untrained in the dialectics of such an abstruse subject, knew not how to answer when they heard the authenticity of the Scriptures assailed. Released from military life, they carried the new skepticism home and converted others. Perhaps remembering what he had observed at the West Point camp, Dwight testified that his countrymen from the South succumbed still more quickly. "Multitudes" of

these, he said, were sprightly and ingenious, but totally unfamiliar with the arguments on either side of the great question. To investigate the matter thoroughly involved prodigious labor, distasteful to the average human being. On the other hand, "licentious" doctrines possessed an intrinsic lure, attractive to persons already eager to listen. Under these most favorable conditions, the French spread their propaganda, inflicting a telling blow upon Christianity throughout the country. Although unforeseen, Dwight bemoaned this result as a tragic price to pay for Louis XVI's aid against George III.

During the American Revolution other circumstances also stimulated a general relaxation of morals. As rebellion took possession of the land, Dwight had watched stable government collapse into the hands of hastily constituted committees of inspection and correspondence. The powers of these emergency groups, being undefined, were discretionary, and the members were often neither learned in law nor skilled in public business. With no precedents and no known rules to guide them, they frequently became the dupes of cunning and flattery. Cleverer characters overawed them; or, as is the wont of little minds, the new functionaries, so unexpectedly invested with authority, fell to domineering. In either case, their decisions flowed too often from a combination of ignorance, perplexity, and prejudice. From what he himself had seen of these things during that difficult time, Dwight concluded that weak and wavering government exercises an influence upon morals and human happiness no less malignant than despotism.

He credited one of its attendant woes, a depreciated and fluctuating currency, with completing the country's demoralization. Lacking a standard by which to gauge values, upright men had no way of telling whether a contract was honest or hard. It was impossible to hire labor, or to buy and sell, equitably. Avarice became the basis for negotiation, barter the method; and barter Dwight denounced as "the natural parent of the low cunning, and the gross knavery of a jockey." The general perplexity which clouded human dealings, he said, lowered all sense of right and obligation. Whatever was not punishable by law became "rectitude" in the minds of the multitude; anything was good so long as magistrates did not meddle nor shame restrain. Justice and

truth, "virtues mathematically defined, and perfectly known in a sound state of society," remained hidden and unseen. With these two pillars gone, the whole structure of morality tottered. The generation which rose in such a worried world, advanced toward maturity with almost no other conception of society. Dwight was convinced that only a man who has actually witnessed the consequences of an unstable currency can ever understand the full depth of that evil.

These were the principal ills which accompanied the country's struggle for independence, as he diagnosed them. Political and economic turmoil had created favorable conditions for the spread of philosophical infection. He based his analysis upon what he himself had seen and contended against, in the army and afterwards at Northampton. To him it was no theory.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, after the peace of 1783, the country began to recover from these maladies, especially in New England where, Dwight rejoiced, the sober habits of the population, the prevailing belief in a Divine Revelation, and the real Christianity of many stood the shock more firmly than might have been expected. It strengthened Dwight's conviction that men who have once been accustomed to the morals of Christians, can scarcely be satisfied with those of Infidels. As the tumultuous passions of war subsided, business was again conducted regularly and fairly, men of "wisdom and worth" acquired "habitual influence" in their communities, public worship was punctually attended, and the whole outlook became more promising. The new federal Constitution established a national government which, since it was administered energetically and wisely, made good men hope for the permanent return of order and happiness.

Just as this prospect began to dawn, another cloud overcast the horizon. The French Revolution burst upon Europe, with profound repercussions on this side of the Atlantic. Being fresh from their own fight for freedom, Americans at first imagined the French were aiming at the same objective. They enthusiastically anticipated the emancipation of twenty-five million fellow men from the thralldom of despotism and superstition. Bestowing almost unlimited approval upon the movement, therefore, they remained blind for a long time to its horrors.



Under these auspicious circumstances, the infidelity of Voltaire and his coadjutors made further strides in this country. Americans had previously been assailed by what Dwight called the "subtle frauds" of Tindal, the "pompous insinuations" of Shaftesbury, the "eloquent, but empty declamations" of Bolingbroke, and the reasonings of others in like category. Insidious though their sophistry was, these Englishmen, true to certain inescapable traits of British character, at least presented arguments which, being definite and logical, could be easily understood and as easily refuted. But their French counterparts, in Dwight's opinion, produced only "a system of abstract declarations," spreading it abroad by methods as devious as the philosophy itself. This school attempted neither to instruct nor to convince, because, said Dwight: "He, who cannot convince, may perplex. He, who cannot inform, may beguile. He, who cannot guide, may entice. He, who cannot explain, may overbear. He, who can do all these, may, and often will, persuade."

Yale's President further complained that the French philosophers did not dare address men of learning, who could reply, but concentrated their propaganda upon "the ignorant, unthinking, and vulgar." They appealed not to the understanding even of these, but to their "weaknesses, prejudices, and passions." The principles upon which they based their doctrines seemed to Dwight to be mere hypotheses, supported by no authority other than the egotism of the author. Consequently, their arguments were usually of the *a priori* kind, founded upon no evidence, conducting the mind to no conclusion, and delivered in language devoid of meaning. Dwight classed these men as "the Newtons and Aristotles of folly" beside whom "Behmen and Swedenborg, those laureates in 'the limbo of vanity,' would lose their distinction, and return far towards the character of common sense."

Why should men of talent thus demean themselves? Their purpose, as Dwight readily divined it, was simply to facilitate the progress of sin. Obviously no man who permitted his understanding to control his faith could ever believe that God will justify sin, or neglect to punish it. This was axiomatic. All rational evidence supported but one conclusion; Revelation made it a certainty. That was why truth and conscience, if allowed to operate, always discouraged wickedness; why men bent upon evil regarded reason

and revelation as their most dangerous enemies. Such men, foremost among whom Dwight ranked these French "philosophical sinners," wished to bring the world to their way of thinking, that they might "reign and riot."

Naturally they won converts. Their doctrines delighted men seeking justification for a vicious course of life. Philosophy of this kind provided new courage for bolder perpetrations. It gratified lesser creatures, conscious of their own intellectual inferiority, by making them feel suddenly wiser than those who had spent a lifetime laboriously investigating the authenticity of the Scriptures. Human beings, already inclined to vice, rejoiced at escaping from the shackles of conscience and the terrors of Revelation. Some were charmed by the novelty and spirit of the doctrines themselves; others by the sense of boldness with which sinning filled them. All found comfort in principles which eased the way to an immoral life. The purpose of such philosophy and its authors presented no enigma to Dwight.

If the Almighty suffered the opinions of Voltaire, Rousseau, the Encyclopedists, and their kind to govern the world, he was certain perdition would begin on this side of the grave. Indeed, in his view, France during the Revolution, while only partially under the influence of their doctrines, exhibited the strongest resemblance to Hell which the human eye in this world had ever been permitted to behold. Among other startling sights was the spectacle of thousands of Frenchmen prostrating themselves, with reverent fervor, before the word Reason. Dwight recognized the significance for mankind of words like Reason and Liberty; but to *worship* abstract terms seemed to him idolatry as meaningless as that of the heathen who bowed down before a sacred cow or stone. It was beyond his understanding how intelligent men could idolize a bare word, sacrificing at its shrine the very thing which it denoted.

Yet, the French Revolutionists had committed excesses even worse. Ostensibly in the cause of Liberty, said Dwight, they had overthrown the Gallic Church, plundered its property, and massacred its ministers. For the sake of Liberty, they had butchered the "meekest and mildest monarch ever elevated to the throne of France," Louis XVI, and his family. They had drenched the

whole realm in blood, and manured it "with the corpses, of Frenchmen, murdered by Frenchmen." Shouting the same catch-word, they had paraded the Bible and vessels of the Eucharist on an ass through the streets of Paris, in mockery of religion and its God. At the Mother Club of Jacobins, Marat, that "twin brother to Judas," had been solemnly pronounced a greater benefactor to the world than the Savior himself. At such a "season of popular phrenzy," Dwight granted, it was a rare man who remained calm enough to see the truth. The vastness of the French convulsion, the splendor of its victories, the very audacity of its crimes and conquests, so dazzled most spectators that few saw the real purposes and nature of the characters responsible for it.

The spectacle of France ablaze was painful enough; but when the conflagration spread to other countries there was cause for real alarm. Despite the intervening miles of ocean, the United States found itself hardly more insulated than France's continental neighbors. Along with the useful merchandise which Europe shipped annually to these shores, came an assortment of ideological "mischief." France, Germany, and Great Britain all, said Dwight, "vomited" the dregs of infidelity toward America. From Holbach's *Système de la Nature* and Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary* to Godwin's *Political Justice* and Paine's *Age of Reason*, the "whole mass of pollution" was emptied upon this country. The last two pieces of scurrility, published in 1793 and 1794 respectively, flowed in as a deluge, with an enormous edition of *The Age of Reason* sent from France to be sold at a few pence per copy or given away where buyers shied at its poison. Dwight made no distinction between these authors: atheists or deists, he considered their motives, and the effects of their doctrines, the same.

They were dangerous because they possessed imagination and skillful pens, coupled with a boldness, enterprise, and impudence beyond example. These writers, he charged, reveled in falsehood as joyfully as good men in truth; they were just as triumphant in defeat as in victory, having, like the Lernaean snake, a spare head for every new combatant; they were so conveniently lost to principle that they uttered "villainy, obscenity, and blasphemy" not merely with brazen effrontery, but with the "sober, intrepid



serenity of apparent conviction." According to Dwight's indictment (which was not unlike, and no more violent than, some of those directed against certain Russian and German schools of thought in recent years), these "outcasts of creation" were well fitted to invade the cottage and ravage the fireside. To save his country from the fate of France, Dwight determined to stamp out the fire of infidelity lighted here by these "scullions and scavengers" of Satan.<sup>3</sup>

There was not a moment to lose. His immediate objective was to break the enemy's grip upon Yale College. There a pitiful minority, clinging desperately to an inherited belief in Christianity, hardly dared display its loyalty to a faith generally discredited and scorned. Student membership in the college church had sunk dangerously near extinction. Most undergraduates avowed themselves skeptics. Many, surrendering completely to the fashionable doctrines, adopted the practices which Dwight denounced French philosophy for encouraging. According to the testimony of one who was there, intemperance, profanity, and gambling were common; yea, and also licentiousness. Another witness affirmed, "not a few were vicious, and some gloried in their shame." If they neglected the classics, they devoured Tom Paine. Even farm boys, who had flax to dress in the barns of New England, read and believed him. Many in the first class which Dwight taught as President, had appropriated, along with the ideas, the very names of favorite French and English infidels, using them in preference to their own. With the *Philosophes* thus reincarnated and walking about the yard, Dwight must have shuddered at the sound of Sophomore D'Alembert greeting Classmate Diderot (Smith and Jones to the tutors) outside the chapel door. Ardent, indeed, were these young disciples in the isolated America of 1795!<sup>4</sup>

Naturally they took the earliest opportunity to test their new instructor. According to custom, those assigned to the first disputation before him submitted in advance a list of topics from which he was to choose the most suitable. For the deviltry of it, the wily seniors included the question, "Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the word of God?" Under the old regime they had never been allowed to suggest the subject. The previous administration had the mistaken notion that silence was

best, lest discussion expose those of weaker clay to the prevailing contagion. But repression only persuaded active young minds that the Faculty feared the issue, which the students logically regarded as further indication that Christianity could only be supported by authority, not by argument. The new President, they thought, would act no differently. But he did. To their complete surprise, he unhesitatingly selected this very question.

It was exactly the challenge he wanted. He told the disputants to take either side; it was a debate, and he promised not to assume that any arguments they might use were their own opinions. If they chose to answer the question negatively, he urged them to collect every fact and argument they could produce, stipulating only that they treat the subject with the respect it deserved. The debaters went to work gleefully. Here was an opportunity they had never dreamed would be given them. They must make the most of it. When the day for the dispute came, most, if not all, came forward as champions of infidelity. Dwight allowed each to state his case fully.

After all had finished, he entered the lists himself. First, he examined the ground they had taken, refuting their arguments, blasting even their statements of fact as mistaken or irrelevant, and showing them how little they really knew about the problem, despite the labor of their preparations. Then, he presented positive proofs of the divine origin of the Scriptures in a torrent of irresistible argument and animated eloquence which left the stoutest infidel in his audience utterly confounded. His bolts had the effect of lightning upon the whole college. Shunning battle was not Dwight's way of winning a war. He struck in the open, full and hard, where all the world could see the foe fall. Almost before the campaign had opened, this decisive victory at the outset started the rout of infidelity.

The President followed his initial success with a heavy cannonading. For the next six months he preached steadily on the subject. As far as he was concerned, the more discussion there was, the better; Christianity, while he was there to defend it, could only gain by it. He started to deliver a series of special lectures on the Evidences of Divine Revelation. These he added voluntarily to his official duties, since the cause was so impelling.

Being "on a plan entirely new," they were received with great interest. He collected material for fifty lectures but before he could give them all, had to forego the attempt because of his eyes. Only with the greatest difficulty was he able to write or read a single sentence, and at times complete blindness threatened him. Often unable to sleep because of pain, he would rise in the middle of the night and walk for miles, hoping for relief. So, his handicap compelled him to be content with preaching his two regular sermons every Sabbath and with the ordinary contacts with the students, in classroom and private conversation, during the week. That proved sufficient.<sup>5</sup>

He forced the enemy to take the defensive, but it required time and patience to drive him from the last outpost. When the next class entered Yale in the fall of 1796, only one freshman was a "professing Christian"; the sophomore class contained none; the junior, one; and the senior, only eight or ten. The college church soon dwindled to two members. The Moral Society, organized to promote and preserve morality in the college, debated, at its meeting on July 11, 1797, the question, "Ought infidels to be excluded from holding public offices?" and decided it unanimously in the negative. It surpassed this error by expelling Shubael Bartlett and other professors of religion because their principles were too strict. One Communion Sabbath, impious scoffers in the dining hall cut the bread in pieces, and with unctuous mockery offered the element to a solitary student who had just come from the table of his Lord. And even in the third winter of Dwight's presidency, the very Bible which he used for college services, disappeared one night from the Chapel.<sup>6</sup>

Such incidents reflected the general state of mind in the country at large, which made the local campaign in New Haven all the more difficult. Before the turn of the century, when Lyman Beecher, a Yale graduate of 1798, went to preach as a candidate for a pastorate at Easthampton, Long Island, he found an infidel club organized there. It was a small group which made up in zeal what it lacked in numbers, being composed of men of talent and education, capable of poisoning, especially, the minds of the younger generation. Rumor whispered that, at one meeting, they had burned a Bible to ashes. Beecher accepted the story as a prob-



able sample of their spirit. He unfortunately also encountered a sad schism in the congregation over the calling of a new minister; some favored Mr. Beecher, but others wanted another. Some of the latter faction sought victory desperately enough to circulate the slander that Mr. Beecher had dined on Christmas Day with Dr. G., a Deist, and gone hunting with Dr. H., another of the same persuasion. It was presumably the most effective way of destroying his character while under probationary scrutiny. The attempt failed, and Beecher received the call. But he saw that the situation in the Easthampton church resolved itself into a question of religious revivals or infidelity, and went to work accordingly.<sup>7</sup>

At Yale President Dwight viewed the whole war in the same light. The young men under his care came from communities like Easthampton. He made it his prime purpose to see that each returned home strong in the faith. In his class of graduate theological students, he trained a corps of staff officers to keep them that way. Beecher was only one of the better known among many such stalwart lieutenants. Along an ever advancing front, his pupils, whether in the ranks or at field headquarters, soon rallied the forces of Christianity. From a great commander they learned how to outmaneuver the foe. This was the reason it was of vital importance to control Yale College. There Dwight gained ground steadily. He drove infidelity from first one lurking place and then another, finally mopping up and cleansing the whole stronghold through a moral purification.

After long and patient waiting, in the spring of 1802, a momentous religious revival occurred. Providence, at last, saw fit to reward a faithful servant's labors by sending down a shower of grace. One-third of Yale's two hundred and thirty students became hopefully converted. Over thirty of these entered the ministry, while the others, in various ways throughout their lives, spread its influence. In the words of one of Dwight's disciples, persuasion and divine truth, through the blessing of God, changed the college from "a sink of moral and spiritual pollution into a residence not only of science and literature, but of morality and religion, a nursery of piety and virtue, a fountain whence has issued streams to make glad the city of God."<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Silliman, then an instructor and himself a subject of this revival, wrote at the time:

"It would delight your heart to see how the trophies of the Cross are multiplied in this Institution. Yale College is a little temple: prayer and praise seem to be the delight of the greater part of the students, while those who are still unfeeling are awed into respectful silence."<sup>9</sup>

Thereafter, while Dwight remained at the helm, the membership of the college church included one-fourth of the entire student body, at times one-third, and once upwards of half. One attained membership only by a public profession of faith based upon a conversion experience. Many others in the congregation who could not thus call themselves technically "Christians," regulated their lives by scriptural standards. To espouse the cause of infidelity became as unpopular among the students as it had once been to express a belief in Christianity. No gentleman at Yale now dared openly to doubt the divinity of the gospel, lest his comrades despise him for stupidity, ignorance, and depravity. This continued to be the spirit of the seminary through the years of Dwight's ministry there, and long afterwards. With God's help, he had won the victory.<sup>10</sup>

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Direct frontal attack accomplished it. To the seniors Dwight remarked:

A gentleman once asked me whether I allowed my children to read the books of infidels. I told him yes: for they must become acquainted with them sooner or later, and while I am living I can confute the arguments they use. I should be unwilling to have them find these arguments unawares, with nobody to meet them.<sup>11</sup>

For Dwight this policy was as easy as it was wise, because he thought infidels taught absurdities. He felt obliged to refute them only for the reason that their moral effect was disastrous upon the innocent.

It annoyed him much to hear mere boys repeat such sophistries. Striplings scarcely fledged proclaimed the current era of eighteenth-century Enlightenment to be the dawn of wisdom for mankind. They lightly wrote off all previous human striving as nothing, dismissing experience as a dull, abecedarian instructress.

Bewitched by Voltaire, they denounced religion as a "system of fraud and trick" imposed upon the ignorant multitude by priestcraft. They found no authority, no evidence whatever for a Divine Revelation. To them moral obligation seemed "a cobweb, which might indeed entangle flies, but by which creatures of a stronger wing nobly disdained to be confined." The world, they decided, had probably been eternal; and matter was the only existence. Man must have sprung, like a mushroom, out of the earth by some chance chemical process; and his powers of thinking, choice, and motivity, were merely the result of "elective affinities." If there had been a God, and if man were a created being, he had been created only to be happy. Animal pleasure being the only happiness, it was, in infidel eyes, the only end of man's creation. This, said Dwight, was the sum of the wisdom which their philosophy achieved. Naturally, votaries of sensuality accepted it, delighted at the prospect of unrestrained gratification. Repression was no way to rid the college, and the country, of these ideas. Dwight's method was to prove them false.<sup>12</sup>

He did it by showing the young gentlemen at Yale the folly, as well as the impiety, of such reasoning. He deluged them with arguments, only a few of which need be cited here by way of illustration. One glaring philosophical fallacy, in his opinion, was the assertion that all things originally had come into existence through mere chance. Dwight objected to this doctrine because it permitted no connection between cause and effect, denying, in effect, all causation. It supposed all beings not to have been produced, or caused, but to have happened, the result of casual contingency. He denounced the doctrine as a mere hypothesis, incapable of being supported by evidence. Naturally no witness was present at such a contingency. With as free a fancy and quite as much confidence, one might assume the inhabitants of Jupiter to walk with their heads downward. It was as devoid of foundation as any assumption; and, Dwight said, the actual state of things refuted it.

He thought the regularity of the world, and everything in it, presented perfect proof that chance had not governed its formation. The human body contained, he estimated, probably more than a million parts, all united in a perfect and most regular



system. Dwight proposed an actual mathematical permutation to figure the possibility that these million parts, assuming each itself to have been formed, would come together in the precise union in which anatomists beheld them. Rather than attempt it himself, he suggested that if the entire human race, since the Mosaic date of the Creation, had busied itself in no other employment, they would not have been able to count the number of chances against this happening. He said, assume the impossible and say the parts did come together, the result would still be a corpse without life or motion. Even supposing it might become possessed of life, it would be destitute of a soul, and therefore, infinitely distant from the intelligent being called man. All these difficulties would have to be surmounted a second time, one of each sex being originally necessary to perpetuate the existence of mankind. The same process would have to be repeated in the case of every species of animal, not to mention trees, shrubs, and plants.

Then Dwight posed an interesting conjecture. Suppose something, however small, had gone amiss; that man's eyes had fallen in any other spot than where they were, perhaps on top of his head, or on the soles of his feet, what would the consequences have been? If his thumbs grew from the back of his hands, or the joints of his fingers turned outwards, how useful would they be? If the mouth, throat, and stomach had been placed, by chance, even a short distance from their present locations, possibly in reverse relation, how efficiently would they perform their assigned functions? Would not the slightest change in existing arrangements be fatal to man's comfort and life itself? Nor could Dwight see how chance could be the source of thought, volition, or virtue. He could only say: "He, who can believe this system, can believe any thing; and his faith must undoubtedly be the nearest approximation to casualty, which has been hitherto recorded in history of man."<sup>13</sup>

Dwight preferred the Genesis explanation. To him it seemed the one perfectly logical and rational account possible. He discovered no indelicacy in the fact that Adam and Eve were naked. After all, they had had the place to themselves; there had been no witnesses. Indeed, from this part of the story Dwight drew a lesson of fundamental importance. Before the apostasy, Adam and Eve,

being fresh from their Maker, were innocent and virtuous. This insured confidence and peace before God. But the first effect of their transgression was a sense of guilt and shame. It was then that they discovered their nakedness, and attempted in vain to hide it from their Creator. Dwight regarded the fig leaves as an apt and forcible emblem of the unavailing methods by which guilty sinners generally attempt to avoid divine inspection. Shame and fear, unknown to innocence and virtue, are the inevitable consequences of sin; for, said Dwight, God is terrible only to sinners.

Furthermore, Dwight pronounced Adam and Eve as having been "strictly married." God himself being the author of their union, marriage had thus been divinely instituted. This was confirmed by the fact, obvious to Dwight, that marriage was the foundation of the well-being of man. In the family, children from a tender age learned habits of submission, economy, order, industry, and peace, without which, he said, there could be no future industry, economy, submission to government, no public order, peace, or happiness. It was the source of the "social affections," involving all human good, temporal and eternal. For this basic reason God had, of course, regulated the institution of marriage by His own wisdom and commands. It was a religious service, and Dwight said God joins man and wife in no other way. He also interpreted the scriptural injunction to mean, Let not man, in any way, put asunder husband and wife, by legislative, judicial, or any other action. This whole section of the Creation story, as Dwight read it, assumed primary importance. How could there be any doubt about Adam and Eve being married?

As to their tragic fall, Dwight deemed the Mosaic account equally rational. Infidels complained that the world is full of imperfection, pain, and depravity. Wondering how Christians could suppose a perfect and omnipotent God to be the author of such a deformed work, they concluded that God either did not make the world, or had forgotten it, leaving it wholly to the control of chance. To these objectors Dwight replied that nothing could be more interesting for man to know, or for God to reveal, than a true account of how moral evil was introduced into the world. This showed man to be unquestionably the cause of his own sin.

The law laid down to Adam and Eve was perfectly clear, just,

and reasonable. They had every motive for obeying it. Obedience meant endless life in that remarkable Garden where every want, real or imaginary, was bountifully supplied. From God they had received only good, including their very being. Gratitude, as well as their own interest, bound them to obey such a Benefactor. He had made them innocent and virtuous; they certainly would not have come guilty and rebellious from His hands. Within man himself, Dwight averred, there was originally nothing to account for his fall. The cause came from something extraneous. It could only have been the Evil Spirit.

How temptation could seduce a mind wholly virtuous, did not perplex Dwight. According to his way of thinking, all experience proved it to be only too possible. Angels themselves, wholly virtuous, had fallen. Any creature would probably succumb unless directly supported by God. The serpent displayed superlative subtlety in approaching Eve when she was alone. Had Adam been present, Dwight felt confident, their mutual support, if not Adam's masculine strength of mind, would probably have enabled them to resist successfully. Moreover, the temptation itself was fiendishly clever. It appealed to Eve's innocent and virtuous nature by holding out to her the possibility of raising herself to the status of the angels merely by eating the forbidden fruit. Being a virtuous person, Eve naturally wished to become more so. The Scriptures themselves commend and require this kind of ambition. The prospect of achieving equality with angels, of gaining the superior knowledge which was the foundation of their superior virtue and usefulness, Dwight thought, would allure any virtuous mind. Less subtle reasoning often entangled persons more capable of discriminating on moral subjects than Eve could have been. Still, alas, nothing excused the guilt of the transgression. No matter what the temptation, the first parents of mankind should have conformed to their Creator's will.

Although God knew of their disobedience, in His benevolence He gave them a hearing before condemning them, thereby setting an example for all human tribunals. At the trial, Adam and Eve labored to exculpate themselves by casting blame upon others, a procedure which their children have followed ever since. Eve accused the serpent; Adam accused Eve; but both had to acknowl-



edge their transgression. From that fatal moment, daily experience fulfilled the punishment which the Mosaic account says was imposed upon them. Throughout the ages, the serpent, cursed below every other beast, has groveled on its belly in the dirt. The perpetual enmity decreed between it and man has always been plain, the human instinct being to destroy snakes, even harmless ones. The reptiles obviously reciprocate this feeling. There was no uncertainty as to the reality of the penalty inflicted upon man. On an earth cursed with sterility, he was doomed to labor in constant affliction and sorrow all the days of his life; condemned to eat the herb of the field, a mighty change from the life-giving food of Eden; and finally, he was to die and return to the dust from which he had been taken. All human experience proved the terrible fulfillment of the sentence. In contrast to other theories, Dwight declared the Mosaic account to be the rational, probable, and natural explanation for the introduction of moral evil into the world.<sup>14</sup>

Careful study convinced him that the story of the Deluge conformed as closely to common sense. To his observant eye, the effects of it were conspicuously visible everywhere. As he rode through the beautiful country of New England and New York, down valleys between curiously formed mountain ranges, as he sailed over the clear waters of Lake George, examining its inlets, islands, and the strata of its shores, the appearance of the earth's surface everywhere forced him to the conviction that a great deluge must have molded it. Earthquakes and volcanoes could not have done so because these phenomena—rivers, lakes, abrupt defiles—existed everywhere, even in places where earthquakes and volcanoes were unknown.

There was more conclusive evidence. Men uncovered the remains of tropical animals and plants in Siberia. How else could they have been deposited there? Far in the interior of New York state, on high ground, Dwight himself saw the shells of oysters, mussels, scallops, and periwinkles—quantities of them. The petrified ones were a dirty brown, but the rest were as white as those seen along the shore of the ocean. Scientists found the bones of fishes on the Alps and Pyrenees, as well as on Mount Ararat. In the mountains of France Colonel Gibbs excavated petrified fish,

several specimens of which, showing the most minute marks of the scales, were in the Gibbs mineralogical cabinet at Yale. Such marine productions exist only in sea water. Since they are found all over the world, sea water must have spread them there. How else could one account for it? There was "not a serious doubt" in Dwight's mind.

Profane history told him the same tale. The flood story, he said, was found among all nations, and the various versions agreed down to the details of Noah's sending out a dove in search of dry land, and the appearance of the rainbow. Such general agreement, he thought, clearly put it out of the class of fiction, and indicated a common origin. Dwight had enough confidence in human nature to feel that men had never been more credulous than in the current age. Reasoning as sharply as the medieval scholastics, he, therefore, put forth this ingenious argument: Since the Deluge story was common to all nations, it must go back to the one family which had been preserved from the inundation. If the story were an invention, that one family must have invented it; but if there had been thousands of other families in existence, to whom this one family told the story, no one would have believed it, because it quite obviously would have been untrue. Noah's unique experience was so extraordinary that the account of it certainly would have been handed down true in all essentials. Infidels might scoff at the size of the Ark, claiming that that sturdy vessel could not have been big enough to accommodate all the cargo supposed to have been stowed safely in it. But Dwight showed the Yale students by mathematical computation that the ship's dimensions proved it was of sufficient tonnage to contain more than double the number of animals which it did contain, with food for them all for a much longer time than they had actually needed. The infidel attitude on this point seemed to him naïve.<sup>15</sup>

Skeptics also asked how the many, totally different races and nationalities in the world could all be descended from the same set of parents. Physical resemblance would hardly lead a layman to suspect Swedes and Ethiopians of being first cousins. Dwight explained it easily. Climatic and environmental influences caused the physical differences in men. Their complexions changed in shade according to latitude. For proof Dwight pointed to the Jews.

They had spread over the world, from Hindustan to Scandinavia, where every kind of climate existed; accordingly, depending on whether one met them near the equator or near the Arctic circle, their skins varied in hue from dark to light, and yet no one would deny that all remained unmistakably Hebrew.

The bronze color of the North American Indians, who lived in a temperate zone, Dwight attributed to "a sordid mode of life." Outside their wigwams they seldom protected themselves from the weather, and inside, they were as continually exposed to smoke. They also used oil on their bodies. White captives, forced to live the same life, became, to Dwight's eye, scarcely distinguishable from their captors. Savages had carried off the daughter of the Reverend Mr. Williams of Deerfield, for example, and after conforming to their habits for a few years, she became as "dark as any squaw you ever saw." On the other hand, Dwight had seen Indians who had been educated in the manner of whites, and they appeared to him to be as fair as many Anglo-Saxons.

So it was even with Africans. Their habits, as well as the climate, exposed them to the tropical sun, with quite obvious results. But President Dwight insisted that, over a period of thirty years, he had not seen a single person of African descent in this country who was not many shades whiter than the blacks formerly imported directly from Guinea. He detected a "wonderful difference" between the complexions of the generation born and raised in the United States and their grandfathers, drawing from this the definite conclusion that the negroes here were growing whiter. He, of course, had had only thirty years in which to judge; whereas, if he could drive down Dixwell Avenue in New Haven today, he would, no doubt, willingly revise this opinion.

On the other hand, Dwight saw with his own eyes a specific, living example which convinced him it was possible for a descendant of Cush to turn white. One Henry Moss, a Virginian negro known for integrity, actually accomplished the transformation. Perhaps with a certain pride, Henry displayed the results to Dr. Dwight in the latter's own house. The President of Yale examined this startling specimen thoroughly, and reported his findings to the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences. The man's body had become almost white, a process which had been going on for



four years. His hands and face were spotted "with an alternation of white and black," the spots being large, "uncouth" in shape, of different hues, and altogether "an image of hideous deformity." But other parts of his body, not exposed to the weather, were wholly white, of a clear, fresh, and delicate complexion, like that of a fair American youth of eighteen. Where the skin had become white, the hair also had changed to a light brown color, and was free from curling, like that of a white person. On Henry's head Dwight found a white spot, about the size of the bowl of a tablespoon, where the hair was straight, although in surrounding regions as yet unaffected the hair remained woolly and black. Here was evidence indeed.

From a former pupil, a reliable clergyman, Dwight also received a description of four Indians, who had experienced the same phenomenon. Three had turned partially white, while one had changed almost completely. In all these cases, the subjects of the change had remained sound in health, suffering no "uncommon sensations" and remaining at their normal employments. Dwight decided, therefore, that disease had not caused the alteration in complexion. Medical science, which had not then progressed so far, would now probably define it as vitiligo, a skin condition common especially among negroes.

Lacking this diagnosis, Dwight presumed it was equally possible for a white man to change to black or red. However, he lent a willing ear to the prejudiced Indian tradition which declared the first men on earth had been red. The more gradual transformation from red to white, and from red to black, seemed more probable than the leap from one extreme to the other. In any event, Dwight felt warranted to conclude that "men, therefore, are not black, white, nor red, necessarily; but merely as incidental circumstances direct." Color was not original, but superinduced upon the human constitution. The apparent varieties of human species furnished no reason for thinking they had sprung from different stocks. Supplementing these physical considerations, Dwight adduced another bit of evidence buttressing his position solidly. All men, regardless of race, had the same moral character—viz., complete depravity. This lamentable but universal quality loomed, in Dwight's mind,

as decisive. Adam and Eve must certainly have been the common parents of Chinamen and Englishmen alike.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning many matters Dwight admitted the need for more knowledge. But he was certain honest inquiry into any subject would support the Scriptures. He prophesied confidently, for example, that when scholarly research opened the field of linguistics, then still untouched, the results would verify the tower of Babel explanation of the world's confusion of tongues. Whenever certain facts appeared to contradict the biblical record, he said, further investigation always proved them to be in accord with the truth of God's word. It could not be otherwise. For this reason, Dwight welcomed exploration into every new field of learning.<sup>17</sup>

He never feared a conflict between science and religion. That storm did not burst in all its fury until after his time, but he heard the first rumblings of approaching thunder. In the geological structure of the earth, "philosophers" were already imagining they discovered proofs that the world existed long before the Mosaic era of the Creation; that it had been formed in a very different manner, by very different means, from those assigned by Moses. But Dwight said the facts were still too few, and too imperfectly known, to furnish a solid basis for their theories. For him, their conclusions remained mere tentative hypotheses. Any man, he observed dryly, with a vivid imagination and the help of a little ingenious, "obsequious" logic, could build the Universe a second time, and see all its materials "spontaneously arranging themselves to support" his visionary scheme. Inevitably, Dwight admitted, "adventurous" minds raised troublesome issues beyond mere human understanding. Could not a child ask questions which no philosopher was able to answer? Even so small a thing as an atom presented difficulties which investigators could not yet explain. In a letter to John Robison, Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, Dwight lamented that "mathematical philosophy" and chemistry, sciences "so honorable to the present age, and so calculated to advance our views of divine wisdom," should be prostrated to the purpose of "dishonoring God and corrupting man." Still, his faith remained unshaken. Truth, he knew, would ultimately prevail, even in this erring world

where falsehood, in "specious and imposing garb," achieved such deplorable ravages.

For Yale itself he had no fears. Neither Jeremiah Day, presiding over the department of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy (Physics, it would be called today), nor Benjamin Silliman, Professor of Chemistry, was interested in dishonoring God or corrupting man. Their investigations, Dwight felt certain, would do quite the reverse. He therefore gave them every encouragement. Dwight himself preferred to speak of the laws of nature as the "ordinances of heaven"—terminology, in his opinion, more accurate as well as more reverential. They accepted his viewpoint fully. Long after Dwight's death, in the eighteen-thirties and forties when geology cast more and more doubt upon the Mosaic record, Silliman upheld it, reconciling what appeared to be contradictory discrepancies, to Yale undergraduates, to divinity students, and to popular audiences all over the country.

In the classrooms of Day and Silliman, Samuel Finley Breese Morse gained his introduction to electricity. His father, the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, had trained him well, and for four years at Yale he heard the steady stream of President Dwight's sermons. He became a painter of portraits, but neither art nor life abroad could undo that early Calvinistic discipline. When, in 1844, Samuel Morse put into dots and dashes the words of that first memorable telegraph message, "What hath God wrought?", he was not indulging in sanctimonious affectation. He honestly regarded his invention as a blessing which Providence, through him, had bestowed upon humanity. He was merely the instrument by which it was done. Such men—and there were many—bred in Dwight's pious school of thought, gladly gave the credit to Him to whom it was due. True science taught what was "only the expression of the will of God in his works."<sup>18</sup>

This was the way, and these the arguments, by which Dwight demolished infidelity. He saw it as the antithesis of everything which his whole training from childhood and mature conviction told him should be cherished as true and good. To him it was a scourge, destructive of all virtue and human happiness, in this world and the next. He who persisted in it, persisted in deliberate wickedness. It was sin, and between sin and holiness there could



be no halfway halting place. Dwight asked: "What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an Infidel?"<sup>19</sup> He could make no compromise with this enemy. As an instrument of Providence, he had to fight the foe with every weapon at hand.

One of the earliest soldiers in the field, he was also one of the most effective, in Connecticut and in the country. The Honorable Roger Minot Sherman, Judge of the Connecticut Supreme Court, loyal Yale man and long an intimate friend, watched Dwight's efforts during these years. Looking back much later, he testified that infidelity of the French variety was then as much in vogue throughout the state as among the Yale undergraduates. Distinguished laymen, the most eminent lawyers especially, he said, advocated it. When the legislature and courts met in New Haven, Dr. Dwight's "high reputation" as a preacher lured these men to the college chapel. The President seized the opportunity to meet "the prevailing errors" of the day. He could not hope to win them all, but he converted many, not by reproaches but by "sound argument and overwhelming eloquence." Judge Sherman declared:

The effect was wonderful. The new philosophy lost its attraction. In Connecticut it ceased to be fashionable or even reputable; and the religion of the Pilgrims, which was fearfully threatened with extermination, regained its respectability and influence. The character of the college was restored; and its increasing numbers, gathered from all parts of the United States, extended an influence over the nation.<sup>20</sup>

To Sherman's testimony may be added that of Nathaniel W. Taylor. As pupil, theological disciple, and colleague in the ministry, no one was closer to Dwight. Estimating his friend's character and contributions a quarter of a century after his death, Taylor stressed Dwight's success in bringing the religion of the gospel to educated people. These, he said, had come to regard religion as fitted only for the lowest classes. Under the influence of eighteenth century enlightenment, they felt intelligently superior to superstition. But Dwight, "in the face of the greatest of them, greater than they," commanded the respect of cultivated minds. He convinced by irrefutable argument, as a lawyer would do who had truth on his side.<sup>21</sup>

He wisely abandoned the traditional "metaphysical preaching," with its emphasis upon dogma, so tedious as to be largely useless. He first presented all the rational arguments necessary to persuade the intellect. Then he appealed to the heart and conscience. He sought and achieved a practical effect. His hearers were moved, intellectually and emotionally. The reaction of the Honorable Jonathan Mason is typical. Having represented Massachusetts in the United States Senate, he should have been able to recognize true oratorical talent. En route from Boston to Savannah, in 1804, Mason tarried in New Haven over Sunday. A visit in the morning to the Episcopal church provoked him to call the rector "a murderer of sense and language," and he added:

I pity his parish; they must have hearts prone to virtue, or I am sure he will never point the road or give peace to the doubtful breast. Our morning misfortune was compensated in the afternoon by a great deal of eloquence and devout learning from Dr. Dwight. Much as I have heard of the sermonizing talents of this gentleman, it far surpassed my expectations. Methodical, eloquent, ingenious, forcible, and in language chaste, extremely energetic, he commands universal attention from his audience, and you cannot leave this church without retaining a great proportion of his sermon for meditation.<sup>22</sup>

The illiterate, too, could understand and enjoy this President of Yale. He entered into conversation with the college joiner as enthusiastically as with the recipient of an honorary degree. Jeff Lyon, faithful negro college sweeper, died as a result of injuries received while cleaning his well. The funeral was held, after meeting, on the Sabbath before Commencement. All college walked in the procession. At the grave, a witness reported, President Dwight "very handsomely" returned the thanks of the widow to the one thousand people present, and addressed the blacks "in a most masterly manner."<sup>23</sup>

There was once in Dwight's household a negro servant who, poor woman, had had few opportunities to obtain knowledge, especially on religious subjects. She also suffered from "slow apprehension." Each Sabbath, over a period of months, while she remained with the family, after his two regular sermons in the Chapel, President Dwight made it his custom to go into the kitchen

THE  
NATURE,  
AND  
DANGER,  
OF  
INFIDEL PHILOSOPHY,  
EXHIBITED IN  
TWO DISCOURSES,

ADDRESSED TO THE  
CANDIDATES  
FOR THE  
BACCALAUREATE,  
IN  
YALE COLLEGE,

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, D. D.  
PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE;

SEPTEMBER 9<sup>th</sup>, 1797.

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NEW-HAVEN:  
PRINTED BY GEORGE BUNCE.  
M.DCC.XCVIII.

*Courtesy Yale University Library.*

Title page of President Dwight's famous pamphlet denouncing Infidelity.





and instruct her, in "a plain and familiar way," in the simplest truths of the Gospel. According to his standard of eternal values, each human soul, whether that of a white judge or of a black cook, had the same ultimate importance. To high and humble alike he knew how to explain the message.<sup>24</sup>

Yale students formed only a fraction of the large and varied audience to whom he spoke. Through the printing press, at public gatherings, in private conversation and correspondence, as well as from the college pulpit, he reached many. The theological students whom he trained learned the value of his technique and, in later life, imitated it as best they could. Nathaniel W. Taylor, than whom there was no better judge, credited Dwight with doing more "to bring preaching to bear on the higher classes, and on all classes, than perhaps any other man of his day, at least in New England."<sup>25</sup>

In the person of Timothy Dwight, therefore, infidelity encountered a foe of formidable magnitude. His fight against it impressed his own generation and that which followed. His arguments represent the studied thought of one of Yale's great presidents. He went as far as the age and his own convictions allowed him. It was far enough to influence profoundly the flow of a major intellectual current through the first decades of the nineteenth century. Those who heard or read what this man had to say, did not soon forget.

\* \* \*

He also gave them something else to think about. It is significant, both of Dwight's power and of the era, that he should have been as effective in the pulpit as in the classroom. The presence in the college chapel of the Governor, or of President John Adams himself, was flattering, but the students paid him the greatest compliment of all. Twice each Sabbath, in the morning when he explained the true doctrine, and again in the afternoon when he pricked their consciences, they listened intently. At the inevitable moments when he did confront the "levity and indifference" common in youthful audiences, he displayed no resentment, but, "in abrupt and extemporaneous effusions, he roused the slumbering and careless, awed the light minded and profane, and secured

the attention of all." Many brought notebooks in which to record what he said; others, after drinking in every word, entered summaries in their diaries, text and all. When Dwight exchanged pulpits with New Haven's celebrated Dr. Dana, the students permitted Dr. Dana to talk to an almost empty chapel, preferring to follow their President to the other meetinghouse. Modern undergraduates are seldom affected in this way. To appreciative minds Dwight's preaching was an education in itself.<sup>26</sup>

Only the seniors had the privilege of hearing him in the intimacy of the Theological Chamber recitations; but in the Chapel he spoke to the entire student body, daily at evening prayers as well as twice each Sabbath. There, from the first day of the freshman year to the final baccalaureate, all knew him. Alumni at fiftieth reunions retained a vivid image of President Dwight's familiar figure as he conducted the chapel service. He always entered with both hands grasping his broad-brimmed beaver upon his breast, striding through the door with stately tread and bowing alternately to right and left as he passed up the aisle through the ranks of students, who stood and made reverent, answering obeisance. In winter, when ice on the ponds was thick, the eloquent President of Yale took his place in the pulpit, wearing the vestments of the season—a close-fitting, drab-colored greatcoat buttoned to the throat, and woolen mittens on his hands. Thus clad, he could and did delight in the service, booming out a new pitch for the hymn when the choir made what he considered a wrong start, leading in copious prayer, and preaching some of his most stirring sermons. It was not until a later, softer era that the Chapel, like other New England meetinghouses, learned the luxury of heat. No matter how penetrating the chill of that cold building, no matter how frigid the faces of his shivering audience, Dwight warmed quickly to his subject. His deep, musical voice, the cadences of his sentences, the vividness with which he pictured the sinner's fate and the contrasting joys of heaven, fired young and old alike. Cynic and adherent felt the glow of his enthusiasm. On many occasions, Benjamin Silliman saw Dwight's hearers become so completely absorbed in his teaching that they "seemed to lose all consciousness of external objects." In January or July, this was real preaching.<sup>27</sup>



A principal reason for his success was the sanity with which he interpreted the Scriptures. Here was a Professor of Divinity, with the blood of Edwards in his veins, who stooped to testing theological truth by common sense. In an age still overfond of debating abstractions, Dwight dared to proclaim the plain meaning of the Bible to be the true meaning. Abstruse logicians might twist it as they pleased; he insisted that what the ordinary man discovered there was what God intended him to find. Perhaps this is why Dwight has usually been classed as a less original theological thinker than some of his professional colleagues. But, as he watched them spinning the threads of their theories ever finer, he saw no useful cloth result from the process. He was unable to perceive that actual good came from purely metaphysical speculation. He appraised Revelation for its value as a practical guide in daily life.

As Yale's Professor of Divinity, he might have been entitled to soar into the highest clouds of dogma at will; but he had other duties. The academic community had its own church, organized like any other. Its members included Faculty families, wives and children, and others, as well as students. All the customary pastoral duties devolved upon Dwight. As at Greenfield Hill, he was still shepherd, friend, and counselor of a flock. He preached sermons as well as theological lectures. All represented the best thought of the grandson of Jonathan Edwards. Ever mindful of the practical end to be achieved, he avoided the jargon of the technicians in favor of simple language. In matters of doctrine, he kept his feet on the ground. This was no small achievement, for he followed the myriad paths of thought pointed out by his eminent grandfather. Having opinions of his own, at certain points he parted company with some who, although they claimed the distinction of being Edwards's disciples, differed decidedly on what the great man had meant.

Unlike many of them, Dwight took no delight in theological controversy. He preferred to exercise a restraining influence upon those who did, to narrow differences between sects and unite all in the main business of honoring God. If a neighbor chooses to worship kneeling, said Dwight, "whether I myself kneel or stand, I shall certainly not disturb him."<sup>28</sup> Being a practical man who liked to get things done, he recognized the necessity of com-

promise. Futile bickering over ways and means only prevented the work from moving to a finish. To Jedidiah Morse, who lived and battled in the ever theologically troubled region around Boston, Dwight wrote:

The stuff of which you in the East seem to be made is too unbending for such a world as the present. . . . I know of no part of New England where God has done more to make the inhabitants happy, or where they do more to disturb and prevent their own happiness, than in the region round about you. . . . In truth your country is so much the scene of disaster that good news is almost as rarely heard from it, as from Congress. Nil desperandum.<sup>29</sup>

War upon Deists, atheists, and infidel philosophists was a very different matter. There could be no compromise with sin. That was in a category quite apart from opinions on doctrine and ritual. Regarding the latter, Dwight admitted that men must inevitably disagree; but he called it "preposterous" for children of the same God, followers of the same Redeemer, to contend among themselves. He put it this way: "How strangely must those be employed, who, while they are walking together towards heaven, quarrel with each other on their way!"<sup>30</sup>

Dwight took the path which appeared to him to be the best. If others preferred another, they were welcome to travel it. God alone being Lord of the conscience, each man had to chart his own course. Dwight followed the one he saw clearly ahead, and many found him a good guide. He seemed to know every step of the road. There were no twists and turns in it; his tracks went straight, and no tangle of branching byways confused him. The slowest straggler could not lose the trail.

One group of marchers insisted upon carrying what Dwight considered an unnecessary burden. They included in their baggage the oppressive belief that Adam's children inherited his guilt. This was a weight which Dwight refused to shoulder. Common sense told him that the individual who actually breaks a law is the guilty party, not his grandchildren. Since Adam's disobedience was his own personal act, succeeding generations were neither responsible nor punished for that particular offense. However, they committed sins of their own, in abundance, for which they

were accountable; and this, Dwight admitted, was a consequence of Adam's unfortunate behavior.<sup>31</sup>

His explanation was simple. According to Scripture, God created man in His own image, which Dwight interpreted to mean in His moral image. Hence man came originally from his Maker virtuous, immortal, and happy. But Adam's transgression changed all that, condemning him to toil, sorrow, and death. That one mistake made him a sinner. Being himself now in that tragically altered moral character, naturally he begat sinners. For Job asked, Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? And, the Savior Himself declared, that which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, or born again, is spirit. It was for this reason that every human heart tends uniformly toward evil, as certainly as apple trees tend uniformly to produce apples. The descendants of Adam, Dwight acknowledged, inherited their earliest ancestor's disposition to sin, but not his guilt.

This made the lot of each difficult enough. For man consequently found himself in a most lamentable situation. His sinful nature led him into continual opposition to the Divine will, making it impossible to render the perfect obedience which the law requires. Yet, as in the case of his original progenitor, one offense meant condemnation. Clearly man was doomed unless he somehow managed to be born again of the spirit. Only God could work that wonderful change, transforming the fundamental character of the human heart so as to make it capable of really loving and obeying God as it should. Fortunately, in His boundless benevolence, Providence saw fit to do this, through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The effects were apparent in the lives of gross sinners thus converted. But what the precise nature of the agency itself was, in a metaphysical sense, Dwight did not claim to know. He said it was beyond human understanding, and no amount of theorizing would explain it. The important thing was the undeniable fact that it existed. Knowing this much, Dwight was satisfied. He stuck to facts.

In his mind, one other thing was certain. This regeneration had to be accomplished here and now. Every man, said Dwight, enters the next world with the very character he possesses at the moment of his departure from this one. In that character will he be judged.



Death makes no moral change, being a mere dismissal of the probationer from his probation. Consequently he who ends his probation unregenerated does so with his sins on his head, and the reward of sin is not heaven. Time was short, and life uncertain. Even for the healthiest Yale freshmen, it was a matter for immediate anxiety.

The question of supreme concern, then, was, What can a mortal do here and now, during his brief span on earth, to win this infinitely important blessing? Some virile prophets of despair maintained stoutly that mere man could do nothing, except face the situation squarely. They counseled each sinner to acknowledge his complete helplessness and throw himself entirely upon God's mercy. What else was there upon which to rely? Every depraved creature should make up his mind to be used gladly as the Creator saw fit, even to the point of declaring complete willingness to be damned if Omnipotence deemed it best for the cosmos. Presumably, if genuine, this compliant attitude might so please God that He would spare those who achieved it. Plausible as the advice might seem in theory, the ordinary worried layman found it difficult to work himself sincerely into such a mood of eternal self-sacrifice. In practice this stern counsel was none too satisfying.

There was, for example, an incidental but no less perplexing problem connected with the process. Dare a sinner pray? These same defeatists shouted, "No." As they analyzed the question, prayer by a sinner was worse than improper; it positively injured his cause. They pointed a warning finger to the scriptural statement, "The prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." What could be clearer than the literal meaning of this plain declaration? Obviously the wicked could not expect God even to listen to their requests, much less grant them. Sinners would do better not to pray at all because it made them more abominable than ever in the sight of an already angry Deity. Only the pleas of "Christians" who had experienced a change of heart were acceptable to Him. This was the advice which the Reverend Samuel Hopkins, and many faithful shepherds of his persuasion, thought it best to give their flocks. Pupil of Edwards and theologian in his own right, Hopkins followed logic to the bitter end, no matter how disagreeable the conclusion.

Dwight, on the other hand, felt that logic tempered with humanity offered a more helpful solution to the problem. Actual experience, his own and that of others, led him to esteem prayer as one of the most effective methods by which man learns the wickedness of his heart. Every individual must be brought to a true understanding of his situation, or the consequences may be irreparable. Human nature being what it is, a man might accept intellectually the doctrinal generalization which held all men to be sinners. But he would seldom really place himself in that class, and, at best, he would assume faith and repentance to be within his power whenever he might decide to exercise it. Something besides abstract argument was necessary to move him into action.

This, Dwight felt, was what prayer accomplished. When a man made his first earnest attempt at it, he was likely to bungle it. His effort lacked sincerity. Failure made him begin to realize how difficult it is actually to exercise faith and repentance. In the privacy of his own "closet," a feeling of being alone in the very presence of God filled him with awe. He gained a sense of his own inadequacy. His thoughts turned to the anticipated Judgment, and suddenly he became aware how near that final day might be. What would *his* record be? Could *he* be sentenced to eternal punishment? Had he done anything to deserve any other reward? Was he doing anything now? Awakening to his own guilt, for the first time, he faced these considerations, no longer as mere matters of academic doctrine, but as grim reality. Truth, dawning at last upon him, overwhelmed him with what Dwight called a "most salutary apprehension."

The President of Yale could testify from experience that nothing so laid low the pride, so annihilated the self-righteousness of the human heart as this. Prayer was the last hope and consolation of man. So long as he thought he could ask for mercy, he never felt entirely lost. But when he discovered that he could not even do that acceptably, when he himself condemned his own prayers, he then began to realize his true predicament, feeling utterly helpless. When a man achieved this troubled state of mind, said Dwight, happy effects usually followed.

Conscience thus quickened, he observed, was ordinarily the indispensable prerequisite to conversion. Of course, a sinner fully

aware of his own sinfulness was still a sinner. He had merely become a "convinced" instead of an "unconvinced" sinner, and there was no intrinsic virtue in this state. His resolutions, his efforts, his conduct remained sinful because they still came from a sinful heart. He was now afraid to sin, but only because he dreaded the punishment he now knew he deserved; not because he hated sin. He would still go out and sin again. Indeed, Dwight admitted, some individuals of weaker clay, having reached this stage, occasionally allowed their wicked hearts to deceive them into thinking it was too late for repentance. Acting upon this fatal misapprehension, they surrendered wholly to wickedness since they considered themselves lost anyway. But Dwight thought these sad instances were rare.

A man with any character persevered to the point of asking what he could do to be saved. In earnest search for an answer, he went to the Scriptures; bad weather on the Sabbath no longer kept him away from the house of God. There he now listened to all that was uttered, as for his life. It no longer seemed to be a scene of tedious, unmeaning rites, but the gate of heaven where he hoped to find escape from death and the way to eternal life. Under these influences, he saw more and more clearly that God alone could deliver him from sin and ruin. He recognized himself as a son of Adam, an unworthy creature, equally odious to his Maker and deserving only punishment. Yet his distress made him cry out for mercy. Guilt and the prospect of hell forced from him involuntary pleas for forgiveness. He decided the question as to whether a sinner should pray, not by metaphysical disquisition, but spontaneously by the anguish of his heart.

Still he gained no rest, because he prayed from terror at the penalty awaiting him, not from piety. Dwight compared him to a guilty child, caught in some misdemeanor, who, at the approach of the rod, begs for forgiveness, ready to promise anything, if only he be spared. That mood does not make him a dutiful child. So also with the frightened sinner. But, Dwight said, it teaches him how obstinate his sinful dispositions are, and with what hopeless difficulty they are to be overcome. Convinced at last that all his efforts must prove futile without immediate assistance from God, he



finally casts off all dependence upon himself, turns to God, "with the feelings of Peter, when beginning to sink, and cries out in *his* language, *Lord save me, or I perish.*" Then only, Dwight declared, "God in his infinite mercy usually, perhaps always, communicates to him the new heart, the right spirit." <sup>32</sup>

Dwight admitted the prayers of a convinced sinner lacked any moral goodness because they did not proceed from a heart good in the Evangelical sense. This, he thought, was what Solomon meant when he declared the prayers of the wicked to be abominable to the Lord. But Dwight insisted that the mere wish to be saved from suffering was neither sinful nor holy, but simply an instinctive desire of a percipient being. There could be nothing hateful in it to God who obviously pitied sinners, as mere sufferers, or He would not have sent His Son to redeem them. He must certainly pity them more when they feel their guilt and misery than when they remain at ease concerning both.

In fact, in Dwight's opinion, the experience of being under conviction of sin had a clear purpose. Unless a sinner felt his guilt and danger, unless he realized his complete dependence upon his Maker, he could not properly appreciate the greatness of his deliverance, the goodness of God in rescuing him, or the nature of that happiness to which he was to gain final admission. It was a necessary preparation for heaven. God could, of course, regenerate a human soul immediately, by a sudden act of divine power, as in the case of Paul. But the average person could not expect this. In the usual course of Providence, as Dwight watched its workings, before renewing a man God chose first to instruct, alarm, and persuade him, and in this way to make him ready.

Prayer, with its attendant meditation and self-examination, was but one way by which it was done. The purpose was also accomplished through the early religious education of children, the preaching of the Gospel, reading the Scriptures, and fellowship with religious men. These were, indeed, the "Means of Grace." The efficacious grace of the Holy Spirit descended upon the soul thus taught, not upon one unawakened and thoughtless of its guilt. The blessing of regeneration was an act of pure benevolence on the part of Him who bestowed it. The convinced sinner

received it, rather than the unconvinced, not through any merit of his own, but because he was thus made capable of understanding the transcendent goodness of Deity in giving it.

Once grace had been received, the "Means" then continued to be the instruments for increasing it. Dwight insisted that it was the duty of sinners and Christians alike to attend to each ever conscientiously. He warned his congregation never to neglect any of them. No doubt, he told them, they should all pray, read the Bible, and go to church with a good heart—that is, from a supreme love of God; but Dwight felt certain it was better to do these things with a bad heart than not at all. Before every such effort, he said, a sinner never knew whether God would enable him to act with a good heart; yet it was his absolute duty to make the effort. Regenerated Christians themselves, as both the Scriptures and experience showed, did not always live up to requirements as perfectly as they should. Dwight held that God gave His commandments to men as rational beings, and allowed none to defer obedience until he felt himself to be the subject of Evangelical repentance. Delay was tantamount to refusal, for which every individual would be held guilty.

Furthermore, Dwight argued firmly, these actions in themselves were good. He who did what God required dishonored his Maker by his life far less, and contributed to the well-being of mankind far more, than he who failed to do it or did the contrary. Indeed, it was to every one's own eternal interest to perform these actions, for they were plainly the usual methods by which God renovates His creatures. He would not have provided them if it had been improper to use them. Whatever the steps by which Dwight approached the problem, he arrived at the same inescapable conclusion: Sinners should certainly read the Bible, pray, and observe the Sabbath regularly.

Dwight acknowledged divine power to be the agent, the efficient cause, in renewing the human soul, but stressed the vital importance of the "Means of Grace" as instrumental causes. In that sense he called them indispensable. He admitted they did not guarantee regeneration—without God's creative influence, they would be of no avail. Dwight explained the efficacy which he attributed to them by a happy simile. A farmer, he said, might

plow the soil, plant seed, and watch the rain and sunshine descending upon them. It was still necessary for God to interpose His creative power to germinate the seed and perfect the plant. God was the sole Agent, or Author of the increase. This could not be denied. Yet the farmer's efforts, the ground, the seed, the rain, and the sunshine were all indispensable means to the end, and ordinarily, without them, there would be no harvest. Suppose a farmer refused to plow and sow, and simply sat on his doorstep waiting for God to create a crop, on the theory that God could do it as well without his help as with it: the man's neighbors would call him a lunatic. Similarly God could renovate man; but, in Dwight's opinion, man himself must use ceaselessly all the means at his disposal toward that great end. In fact, the work of salvation was as arduous as it was great. No object could be attained without efforts proportional to it; but, if it was conscientiously pursued, Dwight thought there was sound reason to expect success.<sup>33</sup>

This was why, disregarding precedent, he stressed the duties of a Christian life in seventy-two out of the one hundred and seventy-three sermons in his systematic *Theology; Explained and Defended*. To him they were as important as the doctrines. Beginning with the two basic commandments to love God and one's neighbor, he explained in detail the precise meaning and obligations of each law in the Decalogue. He followed this with minute instructions regarding the use of every Means of Grace, and concluded with a vivid exposition of the punishments and rewards which faced the wicked and the righteous hereafter. Dwight always emphasized the practical value of the Christian doctrines in supplying the principles and motives for a holy life, and for molding the human character that it might be fit to inhabit a region of perfect purity. He taught that when men perform God's requirements they do good, and thereby become partners in a work which it is the glory of God himself to perform. This, as Dwight defined it, was the "end of man."<sup>34</sup>

Thus the grandson of Jonathan Edwards softened the harsh notes which made "New Divinity" theology unharmonious to many. Edwardians of the stamp of Nathanael Emmons and Samuel Hopkins stressed God's arbitrary sovereignty, and man's utter moral inability to bring himself into the way of repentance and



faith. They sounded fortissimo the "willingness-to-be-damned" theme. Dwight, on the other hand, contrived a happy combination of dependence upon God and personal responsibility. It was so harmonious that the Old Light pastor of the East Haven church did not fear to exchange pulpits with him. By avoiding metaphysical extremes and standing on the firm ground of common sense, Dwight gave his teaching the practical effectiveness which accompanies wide and prolonged popularity. Hopkins was accustomed to preaching to empty benches; Dwight looked into eager faces.<sup>35</sup>

His grandfather had fought Arminianism, and linked his name ineffaceably with the Great Awakening. Dwight gained what was perhaps a greater victory over Infidelity, and at the same time served as one of Providence's foremost instruments in an even more profound quickening of the nation's religious life. He and his clerical brethren learned valuable lessons from the first Great Awakening. Remembering the decline which had followed the fanaticism of that movement, they guarded carefully against a repetition of that misfortune. Avoiding anything which might bring reproach upon their cause, they quickly controlled any tendency toward excessive emotionalism. Their watchful, cautious efforts were rewarded. This time the wave of religious revivals which swept the country, beginning during the seventeen-nineties, continued unabated until the Civil War. It was a second Great Awakening, far deeper and more lasting in the reach of its influence than the first, largely because of this more quiet character.

During the opening years of the movement, Dwight was one of the most effective revival preachers. A single sermon of his received credit for being the means of starting nearly half a dozen distinct, extensive revivals. He preached many others nearly as inspiring. Although he disapproved of "enthusiasm," Dwight defended revivals of the quiet kind. He called these outpourings of the Holy Spirit "the springtime of salvation," saying: "The Spirit of Grace descends then, as the showers on the mown grass; renews the face of the earth; and produces a living verdure, where before there was nothing but barrenness and death. At these periods all things conspire, to persuade men to turn to God." For this, he was ever eager to strive.<sup>36</sup>

His immediate efforts at Yale were first rewarded in 1802. Early

in the spring two seniors were so smitten with a conviction of their sin that their anxiety could not be concealed. Happily, within a short time, both found consolation and peace and, after making a public profession of religion, joined the college church. This was the first intimation of what was coming. Soon more students were found every day apparently submitting themselves to the Lord. During the ten days preceding the vacation fifty were discovered to be "serious inquirers." On the day appointed for junior exhibitions, a senior reported, the "greater part of the scholars" felt much more like attending "a praying meeting than anything of a sportive kind." However, the exhibitions were "soberly conducted." Thus the unmistakable signs multiplied. God quite evidently had come to the seminary "in the plenitude and power of his grace."

Among the students—in their rooms, in the chapel, in the hall, in the college yard, and in their walks about the town—the great subject of thought and conversation was the salvation of the soul. In the conduct of only one individual, who yielded briefly to dangerous temptation, did anything of an irrational nature appear. Otherwise, Dwight testified, nothing happened to give pain, nothing enthusiastic, superstitious, gloomy, morose, or violent. On the contrary, he said, those who were affected, became plainly improved, more attentive to their duty, more modest and respectful to their instructors, and more affectionate to one another. A "distinguishable serenity and pleasantness of disposition" pervaded them generally. The regular academic routine continued normally, and the college resorted to no especially devised methods for promoting the revival. The President preached his two sermons, as usual, each Sabbath, and was available for private counsel, as he always was. The students held meetings for conference and prayers, and friends conversed among themselves. But nothing extraordinary was done to generate enthusiasm. They relied only on the ordinary Means of Grace. Here was visible substantiation for Dwight's theological opinions.

Some feared that the dispersal of the students during the spring vacation might interrupt the work disastrously. The reverse actually resulted. The scholars carried home the tidings of what was happening at Yale, arousing much interest everywhere in its

behalf. There were prayers and thanksgivings in the churches, and the impulse spread. As previously agreed upon, those earnest undergraduates, separated for a presumably gay holiday, wrote letters and made visits to one another, conversing on the all-absorbing topic. No doubt many indulged in self-examination like the one who made this entry in his diary:

I have been less serious today than I ought to have been. I was vain, and light, and ostentatious, and foolish in some of my behaviour. I did not read the Bible. . . . Last night I endeavored to examine my conduct for the week past. I found I had been foolish and sinful and unthinking. O Lord I am dependent on thy goodness altogether that I am not cut off in my sins. Blessed be the name of the Lord that I have been somewhat thoughtful about my everlasting salvation. Blessed be the name of the Lord that, unworthy as I am, I have hopes of eternal life. . . . O grant me that purity of mind which is acceptable in thy sight. Grant me to think more of eternity, and less of time. Grant that I may spend the ensuing week in thy service; that next Sabbath I may be brought a sabbath-day's journey nearer to the place of everlasting rest.<sup>37</sup>

Since this was the attitude of many, when they reassembled in New Haven the revival proceeded with renewed vigor. Half of the seniors became subjects of it; one-third of the class entered the ministry. The influence upon the three lower classes continued to be felt as long as they remained in college. Jeremiah Day, reminiscing at the 1852 Commencement, remembered this revival as the most important in the history of the college.<sup>38</sup>

Since the population of the institution changed continually, the effects gradually faded. In the fall of 1807 the number of professing Christians among the students dropped to fifteen. That winter a powerful revival occurred in New Haven, without having any effect upon the students within the walls of Yale. The young men seemed to be completely absorbed in the things of this world—a situation deeply distressing to President Dwight. One Saturday afternoon in April, 1808, he officiated as usual at evening prayers, but there was a change in his manner. The day was ending, and the Sabbath beginning. In the city the revival was going on all around the college—preparation not for an early Sabbath, but for the eternal Sabbath in the kingdom of the Lord. Yale offered an



unhappy contrast. Dwight read the Scripture with a different tone. Instead of joining in the hymn with his customary resonant power, he sang one stanza weakly and stopped. But his prayer was more solemn, more fervent, than ever, the burden of it being "an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God in the dispensations of his grace." Yet, he made "that solemn truth the foundation of one of the most appropriate arguments, ever presented to a throne of mercy, for a revival of religion." Never did a minister plead more ardently for a people, or a father for his children.

Next day, the Sabbath, he preached his usual theological discourse in the morning, but in the afternoon he told the story, from Luke 7:11-15, of how Christ, with the words, "Young man, I say unto thee Arise," raised from the dead the widow's only son. According to one member of his audience, "God was certainly present on that day," working in the consciences of his hearers, weakening the pillars of Satan's throne, and preparing the way for the introduction of the kingdom of righteousness and joy. Few forgot that sermon on "The Youth of Nain," for it was the "instrumental cause" of the revival which followed.<sup>39</sup>

— This one was almost as powerful as that of 1802. Dwight, of course, took a deep and grateful interest in it. During the remainder of the term his preaching was more moving than ever. So strong were his feelings that he usually abandoned his notes and made his appeals to the students extemporaneously, as only he knew how to do. One evening each week—oftener when necessary—in the rooms of one of the tutors, he met those students who were inquiring the way to salvation. He instructed them with his wonted parental kindness, directing them into the channel of duty and urging them to judge the ground for their hope of a change of heart by their principles and actions, rather than by excited emotion. Having a dread of seeing a young inquirer betrayed into a false hope, he avoided expressing his own opinion as to whether a change had actually taken place, and drew the inquirer's mind from "too anxious an agitation of this question, to a higher consideration of a life of duty."

He would say, "Are you ready from this moment to enter into the service of God? to make his will the rule of your conduct in all things, small as well as great? to do this because it is right and

because you choose his service as your happiness and freedom? This is your duty whether you are converted or not. To do this then, it is safe to direct you. Strive to enter upon it at once, casting yourself for strength and guidance upon God, and seek the evidence of your piety in the path of duty." By these directions he tried to prevent the young believers from resting their hope upon the strength of their feelings—the pungency of distress under a sense of sin, and the fervor of gratitude and joy in embracing the offered salvation. He also sought to save them from the error of making religion too much a thing of inward feeling and solitary devotion, again urging them to express it in their daily life and actions. Years later, in the eighteen-thirties, Professor Goodrich, at Yale, still followed Dwight's wise example in handling the problem.<sup>40</sup>

The advice was wise indeed, for, during this revival of 1808, the conviction of sin in many cases was "deep and pungent," lasting usually for two or three weeks. The transition of feeling in giving the soul to Christ, however, was more commonly marked by "silent peace of conscience than rapturous emotions of joy." One case proved particularly difficult. This student was among the first to be awakened to a realization of his sinfulness. Others came to rejoice in the hope of having been brought into the kingdom of the Lord, but he remained in despair. As his anguish increased, his health declined rapidly, and he was confined much of the time to his bed. His constitution being feeble, friends feared for his safety. In an adjoining room lived an avowed unbeliever who denied the divine influence in revivals and from the beginning of this one scorned those who participated in it. A friend asked him to visit the suffering neighbor. He stood beside the bed, looking at the emaciated form before him, and listening to the cries of an awakened conscience. Then he returned to his own room to weep under a sense of his own sin. Soon after, to the surprise of all, he became a Christian; and, eventually, a successful missionary.

But the distressed student, who was the unwitting instrument of the conversion, grew worse. Every day increased his sense of the coming wrath of God. The approach of night seemed to him like the approach of the day of judgment. One evening, a few Christian friends lingered about his bed, offering prayers for his sancti-

fication. Finally, one went for Dr. Dwight, fearing that unless the boy had some relief, death itself might ensue. The messenger was Asahel Nettleton, who became a prominent itinerant revivalist in his maturer years. The hour was late, but Dwight came promptly. For a short time he seemed overwhelmed, sharing deeply in the youth's agony. Taking a seat by the bedside, he recited the invitations of the gospel, and followed his parental counsel with a prayer to God. That prayer, they believed, was heard. "A sweet serenity" seemed to steal over the agitated sinner's mind, a serenity which was the harbinger of a joy which came a short time after. He gained the hope he so much wanted.<sup>41</sup>

An eighteen-year-old freshman went through almost as trying an experience. At one moment, the joy of his hope was so great that "he thought he could see Christ hanging on the cross, and sometimes as coming near him." He decided, "if Christians enjoyed such feelings, they could say that one hour was worth a whole life of sin." But when he heard Mr. Stewart explain that regeneration was not a matter of emotions, but a sense of the excellence of divine things, he lost his hope and plunged into darkness and misery. His distress became so great that "he almost fainted; his hands were cold and even numb. His imagination was so much affected that he fancied he could see his corpse and coffin before him and hell ready to receive him. He expected that death and torments would soon overtake him." In this state of mind, he went to see Dr. Dwight, and returned more calm but without hope. In the end he, too, gained it. These young men of Yale discovered the accuracy of Dwight's warning. The attainment of salvation was not easy work.<sup>42</sup>

On two more occasions, before the close of his administration, Dwight saw divine grace descend upon the college, and participated in these glorious scenes. During the revival of 1812-1813 nearly one hundred students turned their thoughts seriously to their spiritual destiny. At the last church meeting before graduation separated them, the Christians of the senior class made a solemn engagement. They promised to remember one another at sunset on the first day of every month, and to pray at that hour for the college, which had been the scene of their recent momentous experience, for the church in it, and for their absent brethren.



Thus, before the same Throne of Grace, though dispersed in the flesh, they would be united in the spirit by ties stronger than any this world afforded.

Having taken the pledge and his degree, Elias Cornelius, one of the fruits of this revival, proceeded, with several others, to study Theology with President Dwight. During the winter of 1814-1815, under the enthusiastic leadership of Cornelius, a little group of Christians gathered before sunrise every Sabbath morning, in a private room some distance from the yard, to pray for another divine visitation upon the college. This, at three-thirty on cold December mornings, was a test of zeal; but one participant remembered those moments as among the happiest of his life. For, in the spring, the revival came, after two "peculiarly solemn and impressive" sermons by Dr. Dwight, and the reading, at evening prayers, of an account of the life and "awful death of the infidel Francis Newport." Under these stimuli, "heaven seemed to be let down to earth." Nearly every room in the college contained at least one youth who was awakened to the corruption of his heart. So keenly were the effects felt that the Faculty received a petition from the entire student body requesting a suspension of classes. The authority wisely refused to grant this plea, but, to gratify the undergraduate wish for religious instruction, they held meetings every afternoon, in a room at each entry. Members of the Faculty, and theological students selected by Dwight, conducted the conferences for the benefit of those awakened. This relieved the confusion caused by distressed sinners who had been running from room to room, seeking advice from the pious. It has been some time since the University has been bothered by this problem.

God having thus again blessed Yale, an ardent student carried the news from that favored institution to Dartmouth, where soon afterwards a revival was in full swing. That same year, Princeton, too, enjoyed a shower of grace. In giving thanks for these events, the editors of the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer* lamented that Harvard, founded with many prayers, and nurtured by the strong faith of pious progenitors, had been, for many years, passed by. At Yale, President Dwight, skilled gardener that he was, labored in a fruitful vineyard. No weeds of infidelity throve long there.<sup>43</sup>

## CHAPTER X

### National Horizons: End of the Record

TO DWIGHT THESE revivals were all the more pleasing because, from his study of the prophecies, he saw the millennium definitely approaching. With "almost all judicious commentators," he agreed that "the Millennium, in the full and perfect sense, will begin at a period, not far from the year 2000." He thrilled at the prospect of a time when "Europe shall no longer convert her wide domains into a stall of slaughter; nor offer herself as a voluntary holocaust upon the altar of Moloch." Contemplating the fulfillment of the biblical predictions, he exclaimed, "What a transmutation man must have undergone, when there shall not be a tyrant nor a slave, not a jail nor a gibbet, not a dram-shop nor a brothel, not a lie nor a theft, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same."<sup>1</sup> This was what was coming; and he believed it—with his whole heart and soul he believed it.

The time was short. There were difficulties in the way, but they were mere trials of faith which existed only to be surmounted. He exhorted his contemporaries to "sow in season; and you will reap a rich harvest. Sow out of season; and you will reap nothing." The world could and must be made ready. So, with like-minded brethren, Dwight plunged feverishly into the work. He helped establish the Missionary Society of Connecticut; and, to aid its work, he contributed over one thousand dollars, derived from the sale of his widely used edition of Watts' Psalms and Hymns. He was also one of the founders of the American Home Missionary Society, and equally active, until his death, as an original and influential member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He encouraged the formation of local Bible societies for distributing Bibles; but, as the best solution for that problem, he advocated a national organization similar to that in Great Britain.

One of the final pleasures of his life was to see the American Bible Society well started on its useful way. He helped to establish religious periodicals, and to keep them going by contributing articles. He took as deep an interest in prison reform, poor relief, and anything which seemed to be for the improvement of human welfare.

As early as 1792, the Connecticut society for the abolition of slavery listed him among its members. When three young ladies, daughters of Roger Sherman (signer of the Declaration of Independence), Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth, and Senator James Hillhouse, boldly started a school in New Haven to teach negro children how to read, the civil authorities frowned upon the project as having dangerous possibilities. But the local guardians of the public welfare dared not prosecute the defiant daughters of three of Connecticut's foremost citizens, as happened some twenty years later in the case of Prudence Crandall. The ladies, adamant in the conviction that teaching negroes to read the Bible was a religious duty, persisted in their effort. President Dwight took their side, publicly commending their "dignified superiority to ordinary prejudices." He told them that doing good to the souls and bodies of fellow creatures was "the sublime employment, for which rational beings were especially made; a prelude to the beneficence of Heaven; an anticipation of both the virtue, and the happiness, of immortal being." He did more than that; he raised "a considerable fund" for the school, by lecturing, and the good work continued for many years.

Behind all this variety of Christian activity, he threw the weight of his powerful influence. It was the beginning of a great religious and humanitarian movement, which was to play a vital part in the nation's life throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Such zealous effort was the practical expression of a creed which, for him and many others, was far from being a mere matter of metaphysical dogma. It was God's work they had to do.<sup>2</sup>

The aim, as Dwight gladly admitted, was to advance mankind toward a more perfect state. But the perfectibility which he envisioned was not what the philosophers of eighteenth century rationalism had in mind. They, it seemed to him, promised themselves nothing more than a "long life in the sprightliest career of pleas-



ure.”<sup>3</sup> His version was scriptural and Edwardean. Yet, living when he did, and being the person he was, he gave an energetic emphasis to man’s own efforts. He believed the world was growing better. It was man’s duty to help Providence make it so.

He did not expect the millennium to burst suddenly, “like the morning,” but to creep over the world, “like the twilight,” alleviating the evils of mankind by degrees. He saw many reasons for thinking things were already moving forward in this manner. The approaching close of Napoleon’s career, in 1814, persuaded him that despotism was at last sinking. He thought it meant, too, that Europe, so badly in need of peace, “will not be involved in war again.” Other improvements of all kinds were being made on a scale never before known. A mere one hundred hands could now turn out a thousand spindles. Inoculation prevented smallpox, saving the lives of multitudes. Dwight prophesied confidently that some similarly effective remedy or preventive would one day be found for plague and yellow fever. He declared, “These inventions we commonly attribute to human ingenuity: but the author is God.” He could not believe that Providence was doing all this to no purpose. Indeed, he thought it would not be more than one or two centuries before there would be “such a restraint on human passions, and such influences exerted through various channels, that it will make the world appear as if all the good men in it were brought together.” He was certain that “all this will take place; but when we have done, it will be as far from the perfectibility which fools talk of, as the mite from man, and an oyster from a whale.”<sup>4</sup>

Suggesting, however, that if Diogenes should again come into the world, he would be as much a cynic as ever, Dwight acknowledged that, in the past, progress had not always been the rule. Since the period when numbers of the human race began to separate from the family of Noah, all had not improved. Many had then been hunters, and some had remained hunters. The American Indians, for example, Dwight said, had been making their “week-wams” in the same manner, and using the same tools, for two thousand years, and if left alone would probably go on in the same old way forever. When society was in the hunting stage, he concluded, the human mind had no tendency to rise out of it.

On the other hand, when "a little above the hunting state," it did show signs of advancement. As evidence, Dwight cited the Mexicans and some Indians to the south, whose superiority in working gold and silver the Europeans had acknowledged. Considering the strides mankind as a whole had made since the Deluge, of which alphabetic writing was a sample, Dwight adhered to the conviction that there had been a general improvement.<sup>5</sup>

But, judging from observation and experience, he decided that knowledge alone did not make the world better. Bonaparte, in Dwight's estimation, was "a knowing man, but a wicked one." Motives were the important thing. Without them, he said, man would not act, but became "a beast or a log"; with them he could be "an Alfred or a Paul." The motives, therefore, must be "such as he is fitted to feel; and Indians, without greater exertions in their behalf than those which have hitherto been made, will never feel, nor even comprehend, such motives as influence civilized man." Dwight said the hindrance to their improvement did not lie in the inferiority of their minds, which he pronounced "natively of the same structure with those of Frenchmen, or Englishmen." As proof, he adduced the fact that young children of Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, whom the savages held in captivity, grew up to be mere Indians, distinguishable in nothing except possibly a very slight difference in color. On this subject Dwight could not find even "the shadow of a reason, or a fact" to support the ideas of Buffon, de Pauw, and other "dreaming European philosophers." He assigned the real cause of the Indian's degradation to "the want of such motives to exertion, as he is prepared to feel, within the view of his mind." This was, to Dwight, the only cause of human distinctions. He declared:

Where nothing prompts to action, nothing will be done; where sufficient inducements are presented, every thing will be done, which is within the grasp of human power. When motives cease to operate and excite, man will lounge away life; saunter from place to place without knowing why; dress himself in a blanket; seat himself upon a stone; smoke through the day at the door of a weekwam; or stretch himself to sleep under the nearest hedge. When motives arouse him to exertion, he will cross unknown oceans to discover new countries; coast the

polar ice to attack the whale; ascend the Andes to measure the equatorial latitude; ransack the bowels of the earth to enlarge the science of mineralogy; face the fangs of the catamount, or the tiger, to be called the best huntsman; toil through life to accumulate an inheritance for his children; or fight battles, or slaughter millions, to wreath upon his brow the garland of triumph. With sufficient motives also, he will resist temptation; subdue his lusts; expend his substance; and yield his life for the cause of Christianity, the salvation of men, and the glory of the Redeemer.<sup>6</sup>

It was clear to him that "human depravity, or, in other words, sin, has no tendency to make a happy society; but, among all intelligent beings, will always render the social state unhappy, in exact proportion to the degree in which it exists." Hence, the importance of Christianity which conveyed "motives, capable of prompting the soul to any thing which it commands; such as the attainment of mental peace, the approbation of God, the esteem of good men, safety from perdition, and a title to eternal life." Even Indians under its influence exhibited "fair specimens of virtuous and commendable conduct." Dwight believed that when good spread over the world, knowledge would become the handmaid of improvement, and the necessary energy would be called forth for the benefit of the human race. Then the stock of human happiness would be constantly enlarging. This was why he supported home and foreign missions, schools for Africans, tract societies, and every other item in Christianity's program.<sup>7</sup>

It also explains why his interest in the immediate progress of his own country was so deep. He believed firmly that good individuals make a good community, and good communities make a good country. This was absolutely essential in a democracy where each individual's responsibility, whether in or out of office, was great. He thought that America had already shown that the best way to produce good citizens was through schools and churches. These, he considered to be the most effective instruments for spreading knowledge and virtue. "Without churches," Dwight said, "men will be vicious of course; without schools they will be ignorant." He considered vice and ignorance to be an unhappy combination of "melancholy characteristics" in any people. He gave thanks, therefore, to the founding fathers, especially those who had landed



in New England, for having built this country on a firm foundation.

By establishing schools for the education of every human being, they had laid the basis of thought, "active invention, and good sense in every one of their descendants who was willing to think." They had fitted succeeding generations to reason and judge as free men, thereby also furnishing them with the proper means of becoming Christians "upon the solid basis of sober conviction." As in his parental system of discipline at Yale, Dwight insisted that it was far wiser to prevent crimes than to punish them. By doing so, religion contributed far more to the peace and good order of society than the judge and the sheriff, the jail and the gibbet. At best, he lamented, men were still less perfectly governed, less orderly, peaceful, and friendly to one another, than humanity could wish. In Dwight's opinion, he who would lessen the influence of religion was a fool; and he who would destroy it, a madman. Schools and churches, knowledge and virtue, had already raised the national character to a degree "not often reached by other means." Through the same means it could be lifted still higher.<sup>8</sup>

To that immediate end Dwight gave his life. He lived at a time when "philosophisms" of various assortments floated across the Atlantic from the Old World to the New; and when Europe was torn by the conquests of a military dictator. Were he here today, in the twentieth century age of Communism, Fascism, Nazism, and mechanized warfare, he would have to change many of his opinions, but he would probably still cling to his basic faith in schools and churches. Chiefly through these channels he exercised a remarkable influence upon his own generation. He made Yale College a national institution of the first rank, drawing students from the Carolinas and Kentucky as well as from near-by communities. They knew him far more intimately than is possible for more than a few to know the President of Yale today. From that fountain flowed annually a steady stream of young men, whom Dwight, the most accomplished teacher of the time, trained well, intellectually and spiritually. If, at the same time, God saw fit to make a generous proportion of them good in the evangelical sense, Dwight worked all the harder. After four years in that climate, they carried his influence into every phase of the nation's life. Not all became

converts; but probably the disciples outnumbered those who remained outside the fold. Dwight had good reason for thinking the country's future safe in such hands.

His influence was not confined to Yale circles. All over the country, in the newer West as well as in New England, schools and churches in need of teachers and pastors sought those whom he recommended. He was a placement bureau whose reliability was of highest rating. Newly established colleges and theological seminaries consulted him regarding the appointment of presidents and faculties, and once under way they continued to seek his counsel. Clergymen everywhere, whether they were former pupils or not, habitually went to him for advice because they found it valuable. When things went wrong, churches turned to him as a wise and sympathetic peacemaker who somehow found a way to restore harmony among stubbornly quarrelsome factions. Individuals and institutions looked upon him as an oracle who could tell them everything. Even when two gentlemen in New York City disagreed as to the precise moment when the eighteenth century ended and the nineteenth began, they wagered a pipe of wine, and agreed to accept President Dwight's opinion as final. Unaware that he was being used as a referee, Dwight wrote, in his own hand, a lengthy reply to their inquiry, explaining in detail why the year 1800 was the last year of the eighteenth century, not the first of the nineteenth. As late as 1850 his letter deciding the question was published in the remote *Missouri Statesman*, and perhaps in other newspapers. Men struggling with more serious matters turned to him to find the solution for whatever was bothering them—how to establish a college in Vermont, what to do about Unitarianism in Boston, or about Mr. Jefferson in the nation's capital. He always had an answer for them.<sup>9</sup>

On the issues of contemporary politics, he was an admirer of George Washington and a stout Federalist. Having seen what economic instability had accomplished during the Revolutionary War and the years immediately following, he believed in sound finance of the Hamiltonian variety. For the same reason, he deemed it wisdom to put men who managed their private affairs successfully, in charge of public affairs and keep them there. Adequate evidence is lacking to trace exactly the part he played in Connecticut politics.

That he was a potent force is clear. His friends belonged to the ruling aristocracy of that land of steady habits, and in any circle Dwight was a man whose decisive character and opinions carried weight. He "governed" the young men attending Yale with an influence which swept all before it. Although he held no office, political opponents of the opposing party gave him credit for governing the state with the same effectiveness.

In their local newspapers, indeed, Mr. Jefferson's followers crowned Dwight with a papal tiara, acknowledging him to be Pope of Connecticut who ruled with monarchical power both the temporal and the ecclesiastical affairs of the state. They called him as absolute as His Holiness in Rome, and pronounced Yale College a "Presbyterian manufactory" and "repository of political poisons." They pictured this Pope giving orders to his cardinals, priests, and lay orderlies at the Yale Commencement each September when the hierarchy plotted the program for the October session of the legislature.

John C. Ogden, a particularly disgruntled Episcopalian, pamphleteered against Dwight with the zeal of a persecuted sectarian. Ogden had a special denominational grievance against the established order in Connecticut. He was much upset over a rumor that, in discussing forms of prayer, Dwight had told the impressionable youth at Yale a story about an Episcopalian clergyman refusing to pray with a man who had a broken leg, because he could find no collect for that specific purpose. In reality, Dwight had no quarrel with Episcopalianism; but Ogden pronounced him "ready to propagate the faith of his grandfather by the power of the sword." He intimated that Dwight had refrained from doing so only because he had acquired "unlimited control" by using the "more formidable, effectual, and offensive weapons of sermons and prayers, preached and prayed at his hearers, or in conversation directed at his correspondents, company, and neighbours." Ogden admitted that this formidable man had made "great strides" in spreading his religious and political opinions, yea, his "dominion," over all New England and the country at large. It was an age when political passions flamed high, but the mud-slinging bitterness of such fulminations as Ogden's discredits them immediately. Yet, where there was so much heat, there must have been some fire.<sup>10</sup>



On the other hand, Dwight wrote to a son who was studying medicine in Philadelphia, "Take effectual care not to give offense to anybody while you are absent from us, either by *giving characters, or embarking in political contentions and disputes*. Leave these things to those who love them and make it your care to do what is good and right in the sight of God and to make the most of your time and present advantages."<sup>11</sup> The italics are Dwight's, and the advice may well represent his own practice.

On another, more significant occasion, he also counseled moderation. While an excited nation awaited Jefferson's first inauguration, Enos Bronson decided the time had come to start a Federalist newspaper in the then politically fratricidal city of Philadelphia. Being a young Yale graduate, of the class of 1798, he consulted President Dwight concerning the project, in a lengthy correspondence. Dwight cautioned him to take a prudently moderate course. In a letter dated February 26, 1801, Dwight wrote: "I advise you to avoid exposing yourself to a prosecution. There is reason to believe that measures of this nature will, not reluctantly, be pursued; & it will be necessary for a *young* writer to be more cautious than usual. I advise you, also, by all means, to do full justice to the incoming administration, and to commend it whenever truth will permit." In his issue of March 5, 1801, the day following Jefferson's inauguration, Bronson published an address to his readers written in the spirit recommended by Dwight. During the early part of his editorial career, the young journalist continued to seek Dwight's guidance. His newspaper, the *Gazette of the United States, and Daily Advertiser*, became one of Philadelphia's leading journals, widely influential throughout the country as a champion of the Federalist cause. In that era of unrestrained political invective, counsel of moderation, even if dictated by strategic considerations, was extraordinary. Editor Bronson would have done well had he followed it more closely.<sup>12</sup>

Dwight considered the current bitterness of party feeling as one of the serious obstacles hindering the nation's progress. The fury of partisan strife distressed him because he did not allow it to blind him to his country's fundamental interests. He was, above all, an ardent patriot, possessed of a deep and genuine love for his native land. Aiming at a far higher goal than the immediate ends of party

rivalry in local elections, he turned his eyes toward national horizons.

There in the distance he saw a destiny of greatness for his country. One day America would develop a culture as fine and distinct as any the world had ever known. Hitherto, the few pioneers scattered along the Atlantic seaboard had been too busy keeping body and soul together, in the forests of a new continent, to contribute largely to humanity's artistic and intellectual life. But Dwight felt the time fast approaching when Americans would be able to assert their independence of Europe culturally as they had asserted it politically. To bring that day nearer, he helped establish such organizations as the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences (in the spirit of the Académie Française and the Royal Society of England); and, with his friends among the "Hartford Wits," he labored earnestly to produce a native, national literature worthy of the world's best.

If his own poetry fell short of that high ambition, it was not all bad, and, since he had many other pressing things to do, he at least deserves credit for making the effort. Strained and self-conscious though that effort often was, it had the definite merit of stimulating a movement creditable in itself and, in time, productive of more successful results. Dwight, and similarly inspired contemporaries, recognized that the achievement which he wished for America in literature and the arts could come only with national maturity. For that very reason he urged his generation to move as far as they were capable toward the goal. On his own part, he never shunned responsibility. He wrote poems, long and short, epic and pastoral; and essays, humane and political. During his lifetime they were widely read. Some of his hymns, indeed, are still sung today in churches of several denominations and since he was a keen observer, his *Travels in New England and New York* have a lasting intrinsic historical value. As a literary light, friendly contemporaries rated Dwight among the brightest in the land. America was too young to have produced a Milton, but they felt certain that Dwight's writings would always be included among the "splendid and durable monuments of American genius."<sup>13</sup> His best contribution was to illuminate the way for others.

As to America's position among the powers of the world, Dwight

For  
New Haven, April 22, 1884.

With love joined with  
the care of the temple and the  
action of Count Rumford, which was so good  
as to transform me & As I have not any the  
note of my name equally fast, I have taken  
the liberty to request your friendly aid

I have again done an account of several josses, as well as have made through several parts of New England. This account I intend, if I should live, to my circumstances should not be lost, but left. Now we draft your opinion, whether the report of the people of Great Britain is just. That I have in New England, if written recently, containing correct information concerning the country, its inhabitants, institutions & state of society, would, if printed there, be probably bought. In some British publications, particularly the Anti-Slavery Review, I saw much the same hostility manifested against America, as formerly against Rome, but against Slave being exactly taken up the country at large. If this be an error of general temper of the British Nation, my question is supposed, for in this case no American publication would be favorably received.

Timothy Dwight writes, April 10, 1801, to Rufus King asking advice on the publication of his "Travels" in England.





was realistically confident. Foreign, especially British, critics caricatured things American, but in reply Dwight gave them much to ponder. He denounced particularly those, in both the United States and Great Britain, who stirred up mutual ill will by exchanging abuse and slander. Englishmen, he lamented, had an unfortunate propensity for making enemies instead of friends. Their common tendency was to think that only they were "clean and neat," and that everything English was better than anything else in the world. Whereas Frenchmen, in Dwight's estimation "not one-twentieth as honest as Englishmen" and inferior in many other "respectable attributes," knew how to make friends. Dwight declared it high time for a nobler spirit to prevail among enlightened nations, as among enlightened individuals. Rivalry, contempt, and bitterness had reigned long enough; he favored substituting candor, understanding, and generosity.

Like other New England Federalists, he insisted that Great Britain and the United States were natural friends, bound together by the strong ties of common origin, language, manners, laws, religion, and interests. He saw no reason to fear commercial rivalry between them. The world was wide enough to furnish prosperity to every nation which sought it with enterprise. Americans, he said, preferred British products, and this country offered an invaluable, rapidly expanding market for British manufactures, as well as an important source of the raw materials England needed. The destruction of such a mutually beneficial friendship, he wrote in 1815, would be a calamity as injurious to one country as to the other. He called the War of 1812 "unnatural" and "causeless." France, he asserted, had injured the United States "ten times where Great Britain injured us once."

In Dwight's firm opinion, Napoleon, arch despot and conqueror, was the real enemy of this country as of England. Dwight acclaimed the bravery and perseverance with which the British nation had defended from the aggrandizement of the "Corsican Cyclop" what was left of the liberty, safety, and civilization of the human race. Had the ambitious tyrant succeeded, Dwight declared, the only boon which Americans could then have expected would have been to be "eaten up last." He thanked God for giving the victory to the British, who, he maintained, had defended America's

real interests far better than either President Jefferson or President Madison. He warned the world that this country would soon again have good men in charge of the government.

The time was not far off, he knew, when other nations would be compelled to respect us. In 1815 he surveyed the prospects, and found them good. Even then the United States covered an immense territory, possessing lands suitable for every agricultural purpose, and rich in mineral deposits of a variety and volume which could not be measured. As to the character of the people who inhabited this region and controlled its resources, Dwight had no misgivings. Already they had converted a vast wilderness into a "fruitful field," a task whose magnitude only an eyewitness could appreciate adequately. Their ships were seen in every corner of the earth. What could better attest their enterprise? In business and in the rapid development of mechanical and manufacturing arts they daily proved their ingenuity. Devotion to education and religion made them intelligent and enlightened. Dwight even thought he discerned the beginning of a tendency in Americans to learn that they were not so much wiser and better than the rest of mankind as many had professed to believe. Boasting having proved a poor means of gaining respect, they were discovering the virtue of modesty.

In numbers they were growing stronger at a reassuring rate. The population having doubled during the twenty-five years from 1790 to 1815, Dwight estimated that it would reach 85,610,056 in the year 1900—which was a little optimistic but not a bad guess. In any event, he prophesied confidently that the people of the United States would populate all the region north of Mexico, "station themselves, within half a century, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean," and eventually fill almost the whole continent of North America. He stressed the fact that this population would consist of free men, enlightened by the liberal arts and sciences, governed by equitable laws, and professing the Protestant religion. Since, unlike European peoples, they would all speak the same language Dwight rejoiced, "Consider how many minds will here be set in motion by a single interesting book, on any, and every, important subject." When writers had the incentive of advancing knowledge among such a vast and appreciative multitude, Dwight said, "the mind will



put forth all its powers" with an energy and ardor as intense as that which had been responsible for the discovery of the Western World itself.

Although he never dreamed of railroads, Dwight thought it no extravagance to believe that a future traveler would see America filled with flourishing towns and cities, on the lakes and rivers, in the interior as well as along the Atlantic seaboard; and these, he said, would be centers of various useful manufactures and inland commerce. In every section, as in New England, the visitor would encounter "neat school houses" contributing to create a new national character by elevating the minds of the masses of the population. There would also be higher schools diffusing more advanced education to multitudes, and, above them, a college to every twenty thousand square miles. Higher still, Dwight predicted, there would be "seats of professional science; in which shall be taught whatever is known by man concerning medicine, law, policy, and religion." He foresaw, too, institutions "designed not so much to teach, as to advance, the knowledge of man." Beside these various instruments of learning there would be one hundred thousand enlightened ministers of the gospel teaching the way of life to as many congregations, containing as many millions of worshipers.

It made Dwight hope for one thing more. He said the Chinese, "with very corrupt morals, have, as a nation, mild and gentle manners. May not such manners grow as effectually out of freedom, intelligence, and Christianity, as out of idolatry, ignorance, and slavery? Particularly, will not such manners spring up from these sources, if my countrymen should as a body, come to understand the true nature of war, and hate it accordingly; and should they, as would be the necessary consequence, prize peace according to its inestimable value?" Christianity seemed to him the best means of combating the "harsh, tyger-like feelings of the human mind." Through it he expected Americans to achieve a superiority, in morals and manners, above anything the world had previously witnessed.

He admitted the possibility that America might split into separate "empires," waging wars as destructive as those of Europe. The era of peace and prosperity for the human race, he acknowledged, might be more distant than he imagined. If this country did

break into independent political divisions, he hoped it might not mean the destruction of their happiness. Small states, when safe from invasion, had usually been happier than big ones, because, said Dwight, the limited powers of the human mind had hitherto never been competent to direct successfully the internal affairs of a great empire. States of moderate size had always been happier. Still, he did not really expect the Union to dissolve. Time alone would tell, but, even in 1815, he had a firm faith in the future. A view of the country from a transcontinental air liner today would certainly thrill him, as well as Anglo-American relations, and the prospects of peace and prosperity still ahead of humanity.<sup>14</sup>

Among Dwight's specific prognostications was the prediction that American universities would soon rank with those of the Old World. Certainly he did much to bring that day nearer. He devoted the major effort of his life to the physical, intellectual, and spiritual regeneration of Yale. Having no fear that a secularization of the curriculum could be harmful, he broadened it as far as financial limitations permitted. Instead of a theological cloister, he made the college an institution of wide learning, alive to the cause of all truth. In the process he showed the public at large the real function and value of a university in a young democracy. Dwight's social gifts, his talent for making friends, the diversity of his interests, and his intelligent patriotism made him the most valuable connecting link between the academic and profane worlds which Yale had had up to that time. Succeeding administrations looked back to his as a standard.

Toward the end of his life Dwight confessed that, like others of the race, he had coveted worldly reputation and influence to a degree which he could not justify.<sup>15</sup> His standards were high. It could hardly have been excessive ambition which made him choose to spend his life in classroom and pulpit. He might well have sought public office successfully. But, as President and Professor of Divinity in a college which was far from flourishing when he took charge of it, he exerted an influence more profound and lasting, perhaps, than he could have exerted in Congress or the Executive Mansion.

In boyhood Dwight looked up to his grandfather, Jonathan

Edwards, as a model worth following. To what extent he actually shaped his own life by that example cannot be determined. But there are interesting parallels, with significant differences, in the careers of the two men. Both, after tempering the precocity of childhood with an education at Yale, entered the ministry. Edwards' pastorate ended in a furious row, and he was ousted. The only serious controversy in which Dwight became involved with his congregation, occurred when they fought to prevent him from leaving them. In doctrinal and other matters he won them to his way of thinking, and at the same time retained their affection.

His grandfather's genius as a metaphysical thinker has long been justly acclaimed. Yet Edwards died without having worked out a complete theological system. He had taught certain important principles, and started lines of thought which he left to his successors to finish. They pushed them in varying directions which Edwards himself might or might not have followed.

If less original as a metaphysician, Dwight formed a complete scheme of theology, so clearly stated and so practical in its approach to complicated issues that it long remained a standard here and abroad. Dwight, too, had numerous and eminent disciples; but after he was gone the well packed volumes of his *Theology; Explained and Defended* spoke for him more eloquently and accurately than any of them could ever do. It went through edition after edition, maintaining its precedence long after its author had been taken from his labors. Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, theological students in England and Scotland as well as America studied it as a basic text. In 1866, a leading bookseller in Melbourne, Australia, reported selling many copies for that purpose there. Leonard Bacon, in 1859, paid Dwight tribute for having left to all evangelical churches using the English language "the only System of Theology that ever has become in two hemispheres a popular religious classic." As a theologian whose works were read, Dwight held his own even in competition with Edwards himself.<sup>16</sup>

Jonathan Edwards preached revivals, giving sinners in the hands of an angry God a vivid realization of hell's torments. The fire of the first Great Awakening blazed briskly but briefly, going out almost as suddenly as it had sprung up. Dwight helped, in a major



way, to keep the second great revival movement burning more slowly and more steadily. It was still aflame when death took him, and then there were other hands to keep it bright through many more years. Edwards fought Arminianism brilliantly. But his grandson's battle to make Calvinism a living, vital force, in the face of the threat from Infidelity, may be counted a more glorious triumph.

Both men, too, became college presidents. Tragically soon after going to Princeton, Edwards died, before he could further the cause of American education in any substantial way. On the other hand, Dwight's influence was profound, first through his own school and then notably at Yale. As a poet, clergyman, and college professor, Dwight was distinguished by his practical common sense: he knew how to get things done and how to get along with people. Yale probably has never had a more skilled administrator. Yet, busy as he was, managing the institution, he also contributed much to establish a basis for the popular notion (now somewhat optimistic) that all college presidents are gifted with intellectual leadership. Altogether, in the breadth and effectiveness of his influence, Dwight may be credited fairly with having surpassed the record of his theological grandfather.

In his own day, he was regarded "with a species of idolatry by those around him." Undergraduates, young animals not always given to such hero-worship, "almost adored him." Many ever afterward blessed the good fortune which had sent them to Yale while he presided there. S. G. Goodrich wrote, a quarter of a century after Dwight's death, "Those who read his works only, can not fully realize the impression which he made upon the age in which he lived," because, he added, Dwight was "unquestionably, at that time, the most conspicuous man in New England, filling a larger space in the public eye, and exerting a greater influence than any other individual. No man since his time has held an equal ascendancy, during his day and generation in New England, except perhaps Daniel Webster."<sup>17</sup> This, rather than rhetorical effect, was what Benjamin Silliman had in mind when he exclaimed, "How many men have lived, in this land, who have done it more good! Since Washington, how many have died more extensively, or more

justly lamented!"<sup>18</sup> Jonathan Edwards held no such place in the minds and hearts of his contemporaries.

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In February, 1816, Dwight's health collapsed. The nature of his disease remained unknown until a post-mortem examination disclosed cancer of the bladder. For a year, rarely free from excruciating pain, he carried on with his customary energy. During the summer term he preached steadily in the chapel, heard the senior recitations, taught his class of divinity students, and administered college affairs with unabated zeal. Somehow he also managed to do the other things he wanted to accomplish, as though he had nothing else to think about.

Facing death itself, he worked as feverishly as ever. He wrote a poem of some fifteen hundred lines, depicting a contest between Genius and Common Sense, with Truth as referee. He dictated the first part of it, to an amanuensis, in the difficult stanza of *The Faery Queene*, often at the rate of four stanzas an evening. He planned a series of literary essays on miscellaneous subjects, in the manner of *The Spectator*, to be published once a week in a half-sheet. For experimental purposes he wrote several numbers to see how many he could do in a given time without interfering with his other duties. He also pushed a scheme for a periodical, a review and magazine, planning it on a scale to surpass contemporary English and American reviews. Having progressed to the point of preparing a prospectus, he intended to start it forthwith, and even promised to furnish one-quarter of the original matter for every number himself. Absorbed as ever in a favorite topic, he also wrote a series of Essays on the Evidences of Divine Revelation, enough for a sizable volume. All together he probably never wrote more than during those last months.

But his health grew steadily worse. After November 27 he did not meet the seniors again. Confined to his house, he continued to hear the theological class there, until the last week. At their final recitation he discoursed for an hour and a half on the Trinity as keenly as always. Then one evening, at twilight, he finished his Essays on the Evidences of Divine Revelation. Declining the aid of a candle in the growing darkness, he stitched the cover on the

manuscript with his own hands, and, having completed it, said, "There, I have done." Three days later, on January 11, 1817, in the sixty-fifth year of his age and the twenty-second of his Presidency, he died. Jedidiah Morse, his old companion in many causes, wrote, "The death of our invaluable friend Dr. Dwight is indeed a public loss, which will probably be more extensively felt, than that of the death of any other man in our country would be. His sun has set in its full glory."<sup>19</sup>

In his life Timothy Dwight embodied all that he had taught. To the end he did his part—for God, for country, and for Yale.



# Bibliography

## MANUSCRIPTS

Dwight manuscripts are gathered in no one convenient spot, and the ravages of time have been devastating. Surprisingly little material of this kind is at Yale. Dwight himself burned a number of his papers before his death, apparently chiefly sermons which he preferred not to have published. The Chicago fire destroyed another group; mice reduced to pulp still another batch stored in a trunk; changes of residence by members of the family from city to city, and the usual causes have led to the disappearance of the bulk of what must have been a large correspondence. Dwight items are very rare in dealers' catalogues. But a thorough canvass of college and university libraries, state and local historical societies, public libraries of cities and states, private collections, and living members of the Dwight family, provided a representative collection of Dwight's correspondence and other manuscript material relating to his life.

Descendants of President Dwight cooperated generously in this search. Mrs. Charles B. Cole made available the interesting papers in her possession. Among these, in addition to correspondence, a notebook bearing the title, "Biographical Hints and Facts respecting the late Revd. Timothy Dwight, D.D., President of Yale College, written in the month of July, 1817," by Benjamin Woolsey Dwight, second son of President Dwight, is a principal source for the facts of Dwight's career. Other members of the Dwight family who granted access to papers in their possession, either directly or by photostatic copies and transcripts, and helped in various ways include:

Dr. Edward S. Dwight, Smyrna, Delaware  
Mr. Winthrop E. Dwight, New York City  
Mr. L. Frederic Pease, Wallingford, Connecticut  
The Misses Julia and Marion McG. Dwight, Brookline, Massachusetts  
Miss Agnes L. Dwight, Picton, Ontario  
Mrs. Charles N. Akers, St. Paul, Minnesota  
Mr. T. W. Dwight, Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
Mr. Herbert B. Dwight, Newton, Massachusetts  
Mr. T. W. Dwight, Toronto, Canada

Miss Elizabeth B. Dwight of Philadelphia declined to furnish any information about papers apparently in her possession; but it is probable that this material would not seriously alter the conclusions reached in the present study. Mr. Steven T. Byington furnished the diary of Jeremiah Evarts, and Mr. James C. Sawyer of Andover, Massachusetts, Mr. Sherrod Soule of Congregational House, Hartford, Connecticut, Mr. George Merwin of Greenfield Hill, Connecticut, Mr. Lemuel Welles of Ridgefield, Connecticut, Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes of Washington, D.C., Mr. George Dudley Seymour, and many others not connected with the Dwight family, pointed out various materials. All this aid is acknowledged gratefully.

The original records of the Greenfield Hill Church are in the Connecticut State Library, Hartford; the Fairfield Historical Society, Fairfield, Connecticut, has photostatic copies. The Yale Corporation Records for President Dwight's administration are in the office of the Secretary of the University. In the Yale University Library, the papers of Benjamin Silliman, Jedidiah Morse, Alexander

M. Fisher, and student diaries and class notebooks constitute principal sources, together with miscellaneous items identified with no special collections and cited specifically in the footnotes.

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Dwight's son said that this was "not acknowledged" by Dwight to be his.

#### SKETCHES OF DWIGHT BY CONTEMPORARIES

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## Footnotes to Chapters

### CHAPTER I—YEARS OF PROMISE

1. These stories were recorded by Dwight's second son, Benjamin Woolsey Dwight, who got them from Dwight's sister Fidelia (Mrs. Jonathan Edwards Porter) and her husband, who in turn had often heard her mother tell them. They are in Benjamin Woolsey Dwight's notebook, "Biographical Hints and Facts respecting the late Revd. Timothy Dwight, D.D., President of Yale College, written in the month of July, 1817"—now in the possession of Mrs. Charles B. Cole, of Upper Montclair, N. J., to whom I am indebted for the privilege of examining it. Hereafter, it is cited as MS. Biog. Hints.

2. Died 1660.

3. A Puritan divine (1572?-1636) who refused to wear a surplice and preferred his own prayers to those of the prayer book; for thirty years vicar at Dedham, Essex.

4. His will is printed in Benjamin Woodbridge Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight* (New York, 1874), I, 97-98; for an account of John Dwight see I, 91-99.

5. Captain Timothy Dwight (1629-1717/18), *ibid.*, I, 102-105.

6. Justice Nathaniel Dwight (1666-1711), *ibid.*, I, 109.

7. Colonel Timothy Dwight (1694-1771), *ibid.*, I, 113-120. Henceforth, it became the family tradition to name the eldest son, Timothy. See Franklin B. Dexter, ed., *Diary of David McClure* (New York, 1899), p. 36.

8. See his correspondence with his superior officers, printed in *Historical Magazine*, X (1866), 109-117, 141-144, 178-181.

9. His wife described to her grandson her experiences during early French and Indian raids upon Northampton. See Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York* (New Haven, 1822), I, 348.

10. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 329.

11. Major Timothy Dwight (1726-1777), fifth generation: MS. Biog. Hints; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 130-135.

12. MS. Biog. Hints.

13. *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 134-139; "Diaries & Letters of Mrs. Sarah Pierpont Edwards," printed in *Hours at Home*, Sept., 1867, p. 421.

14. Portraits of her are in the possession of Mrs. Theodore Dwight and Miss Mary C. Taylor, both of Hartford, Conn.

15. *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 119; 133-134; B. W. Dwight, *History of Descendants of Elder John Strong*, (Albany, N.Y., 1871), I, 256-257. For a description of Northampton at a later date see Dwight, *Travels*, I, 327 ff.; IV, 155.

16. President Timothy Dwight (1752-1817), fourth of the name, and sixth generation of Dwights in America.

17. Caleb Strong to S. E. Dwight, Mar. 26, 1817, quoted in MS. Biog. Hints.

18. "The Friend, by James Littlejohn," No. II, printed in *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, Mar. 30, 1786, I, 50-51; reprinted in Mathew Carey's *American Museum*, V, 220-222 (Mar., 1789).

19. Caleb Strong to S. E. Dwight, Mar. 26, 1817, quoted in MS. Biog. Hints.
20. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Timothy Dwight, *Theology Explained and Defended, in a Series of Sermons, with a Memoir of the Life of the Author* (Middletown, Conn., 1818), I, v.
21. MS. Biog. Hints.
22. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, v; "Biographical Memoir of the Rev. Timothy Dwight" [by Denison Olmsted] in *Port Folio*, IV, 356 (Nov., 1817).
23. MS. Biog. Hints.
24. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, vi; "Biographical Anecdotes of T. D.," MS. notebook owned by Mrs. C. N. Akers, of St. Paul, Minn.
25. Thomas Salmon, *Geographical & Historical Grammar* . . . (London, 1754), Preface.
26. MS. Biog. Hints.
27. MS. Biog. Hints.
28. William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (New York, 1857), I, 606-607; F. B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History* (New York, 1896), II, 594-597.
29. Enoch Huntington, *The Happy Effects of Union and the Fatal Tendency of Divisions, Shewn in a sermon preached before the Freemen of the town of Middletown, at their annual meeting, April 8, 1776* (Hartford, 1776).
30. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, vii.
31. "Biographical Notice of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," in *The Analectic Magazine*, IX, 266 (Apr., 1817); *Collegii Yalensis, Quod-Est Novo-Portu Connecticutensium, Statuta, A Praeside Et Sociis Sancita-In Usum Iuventutis Academicæ* (New Haven, 1764), Chap. I; *The Laws of Yale-College in New Haven, in Connecticut, Enacted by the President and Fellows* (New Haven, 1774), Chap. I, p. 3.
32. MS. Biog. Hints; Akers MS. Biographical Anecdotes of T. D.; "Biographical Notice of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," in *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 266 (Apr., 1817); Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, viii; Timothy Dwight, *A Statistical Account of the City of New Haven* (New Haven, 1811), pp. 52-53; W. L. Kingsley, *Yale College*, I, 91-93; Yale Corp. Records (typewritten copy in Secretary's office), I, 174, 176.
33. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 364-366.
34. Benjamin Silliman, *A Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight, Delivered as a Eulogium, in New Haven, February 12, 1817* (New Haven, 1817), p. 5; William B. Sprague, "Life of Timothy Dwight," in *The Library of American Biography*, ed. Jared Sparks (Boston, 1845), Series II, IV, 257.
35. *Collegii Yalensis . . . Statuta* (New Haven, 1764), Chap. IV, No. 6, p. 8; *The Laws of Yale-College in New Haven in Connecticut, Enacted by the President and Fellows* (New Haven, 1774), Chap. IV, No. 6, pp. 10-11; letter from Eleazar Wheelock to David McClure and David Avery, Lebanon, Nov. 5, 1765, printed in E. H. Gillette, "Yale College One Hundred Years Ago," *Hours at Home*, X, 332 (Feb., 1870); H. P. Johnston, *Nathan Hale* (1914 ed.), p. 25.
36. *The Laws of Yale College*, 1774, pp. 7, 14.
37. In after years Mitchell and Dwight rejoiced together over this event. Dwight always remained grateful to his instructor and fully acknowledged the deep indebtedness. Mitchell lived to see the full fruit of his effort. He then liked to recall the readiness with which young Dwight had adopted his advice, and the strength with which he henceforth resisted idle and profligate influences in favor



of industry and virtue. When Dwight himself became a tutor, he performed the same service for James Hillhouse, who was to fill so large a place in the life of Connecticut and the college. The chain for good ran onward endlessly. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, viii-ix; "Biographical Notice of Rev. Timothy Dwight" in *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 266 (Apr., 1817); Denison Olmsted, "Biographical Memoir of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," in *Port Folio*, IV, 356; Royal Robbins, "Sketch of S. M. Mitchell," in *Quarterly Christian Spectator*, VIII, 207-208 (June, 1836); Leonard Bacon, "Sketch of the Life and Character of James Hillhouse," in *Quarterly Christian Spectator*, V, 239 (June, 1833); and his *Sketch of the Life and Public Services of Hon. James Hillhouse* (New Haven, 1860), p. 9.

38. C. A. Goodrich, *Incidents in the Life of Pres. Dwight* (New Haven, 1831), p. 24; MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, ix; William Jenks to B. W. Dwight, 1863, in the latter's *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 153.

39. Now owned by Mr. L. F. Pease of Wallingford, Conn., who kindly allowed me to examine it.

40. Probably the Mr. John Miller who advertised in the *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy* of Nov. 17, 1769, that all who "encouraged" his private school, two evenings a week, would be waited upon punctually, instructed carefully, and "treated with all due respect" for the modest sum of sixpence per week. The following year, on Nov. 23, 1770, in the same paper, he announced classes during the day as well as at night, and, among other things, promised to teach navigation.

41. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir, Dwight, *Theology*, I, ix-x; Akers MS. Biographical Anecdotes of T. D.; [S. G. Goodrich], *Recollections of a Lifetime* (New York, 1856), I, 351-352, footnote.

42. For example, his famous "Columbia, Columbia, to glory rise," printed in *American Museum*, I, 566 (June, 1787). Some of his hymns are still found in Methodist and Episcopalian as well as Congregational hymnals. See also Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight*, pp. 8-9.

43. Memoir, Dwight, *Theology*, I, x.

44. Undergraduate memorandum book, owned by Mr. L. F. Pease.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Jabez Hamlin, a classmate (Yale, 1769), who met an early death in the Revolutionary War. See Dexter, *Biographical Sketches*, III, 339.

47. Undergraduate memorandum notebook, owned by Mr. L. F. Pease.

48. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xii; *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*, Friday, Sept. 15, 1769, contains an account of the Commencement exercises.

49. *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*, Friday, Jan. 6, 1769, p. 4; F. B. Dexter, ed., *The Diary of David McClure*, p. 19.

50. Major Timothy Dwight to Timothy Dwight, Jr., Jan. 30, 1769, in the possession of Miss Inglis Griswold, of New York, N. Y.; F. B. Dexter, ed., *The Diary of David McClure*, p. 19; Dwight's undergraduate memorandum notebook, owned by Mr. L. F. Pease.

51. Dwight did not even take his share of the paternal estate after his father's death: H. E. Dwight, Apr. 6, 1817, quoted in MS. Biog. Hints; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 141; Yale Corp. Records (typewritten copy in Secretary's office), I, 185, 195; Memoir, Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvii.

## CHAPTER II—TUTOR AT YALE

1. Whether this was the ancient Hopkins Grammar School is uncertain. Dwight's son says in the Memoir prefixed to Dwight's *Theology*, I, x, that a short time after leaving college Dwight "was employed to take charge of a grammar school at New Haven." The sketch of Dwight printed in the *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 267 (Apr., 1817), states that Dwight was an instructor in "the" grammar school at New Haven. This sketch was published anonymously, but from internal evidence the author obviously knew Dwight and was interested in, if not connected with, Yale College. F. B. Dexter says (*Biographical Sketches of Yale Graduates*, V, 326) Prof. James L. Kingsley, who knew Dwight later but not in 1769-1771, wrote it. Prof. Josiah W. Gibbs states in his "Reminiscences of Prof. James L. Kingsley, with a list of his writings," a manuscript now in the Yale University Library, that Kingsley wrote the sketch of Dwight first published under the signature "C" in the *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*, Mar. 11, 1817, and reprinted in the *Port Folio*, Nov., 1817; but this is erroneous because the *Port Folio* sketch was obviously by Denison Olmsted (see Denison Olmsted, "Timothy Dwight as a Teacher," *American Journal of Education*, V, 585 Sept., 1858, and William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 159-161). Dexter (*Biographical Sketches*, III, 321) and Benjamin Woodbridge Dwight (*History of the Descendants of John Dwight of Dedham*, I, 141) assumed that the school which Dwight taught at this time was the Hopkins Grammar School. As Leonard Bacon points out (*Historical Discourse on the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of the Hopkins Grammar School*, New Haven, 1860, p. 59), no other regularly established grammar school is known to have existed in New Haven at that time, and it is doubtful whether such a small town could have supported another. Bacon also says that "Professor Kingsley" (that is, James Luce Kingsley) included Dwight's name in a list of Hopkins teachers which Kingsley prepared and published in the catalogue of the school for 1850-1851. Dwight is also listed as rector of Hopkins for the years 1769-1770 on p. 12 of the *Catalogue of the Trustees, Rectors, Instructors, and Alumni of the Hopkins Grammar School of New Haven, Connecticut, 1660-1902* (New Haven, 1902); but this list was apparently based on the earlier one by Kingsley.

Against this is the fact that there is nothing in the original manuscript records of the Hopkins Grammar School to show that Dwight ever taught there. Indeed, they show other men teaching during the years Dwight is supposed to have been there; and the school then had only one teacher who was automatically also rector. According to these records, Mr. Buckingham St. John taught the school from the time he graduated from Yale in Sept., 1768, to the time he became a tutor at the college in Nov., 1770. St. John was drowned May 5, 1771, and his obituary notice in the *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy* (May 10, 1771, p. 3) states that he taught "the" grammar school at New Haven for two years from the time of his graduation. Dexter (*Biographical Sketches*, III, 296-297) says the same thing. St. John was succeeded by Samuel Darling, a classmate of Dwight's at Yale (1769), who served as rector of the Hopkins Grammar School during the academic year 1770-1771. Henry Bronson, who knew Darling, also states this in the *New Haven Colony Historical Society Papers*, II, 311-312; and Dexter, apparently using Bronson, repeats it in *Biographical Sketches*, III, 319-320. The Hopkins records agree with this. There is, therefore, no place for Dwight in the list of Hopkins rectors because he became a tutor at Yale in the fall of 1771. Since Dwight later had a school of his own both at Northampton and at Greenfield Hill (that is, all his life except when he was serving in the Revolutionary army and teaching at Yale), it is quite possible that

he established a school of his own during these two years, 1769-1771, at New Haven. No advertisement for such a school appeared in the local New Haven newspaper (*Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*), but it is difficult to account for his teaching activities at this period in any other way. Certainly he had the initiative and independence to do it in spite of his youth.

2. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xi; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 267 (Apr., 1817).

3. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1771; Charles A. Goodrich, *Incidents in the Life of President Dwight, Illustrative of his Moral and Religious Character: Designed for Young Persons* (New Haven, 1831), pp. 30-31; MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir, Dwight, *Theology*, I, xi-xiii; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 267-268 (Apr., 1817); Dwight, *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven* (New Haven, 1811), p. 53; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (New Haven, 1817), p. 8.

4. [James L. Kingsley], "A Sketch of the History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 30 (Aug., 1835).

5. *Connecticut Courant*, Sept. 4, 1775, and Mar. 18, 1776; Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, I, 707-710; Autobiographical Memoir prefixed to *The Poetical Works of John Trumbull* (Hartford, 1820), I, 14; Diary of Jonathan Judd quoted in *Yale Literary Magazine*, XVI, 366 (July, 1851); Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of Yale Graduates*, III, 127, 264; *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* (New York, 1901), ed. F. B. Dexter, I, 616.

6. Autobiographical Memoir prefixed to Trumbull's *Works* (2 vols., 1820), I, 9-15; Moses C. Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution* (New York, 1897), I, 187-223.

7. Trumbull's preface to his *Progress of Dulness: Part Third, the Progress of Coquetry or the Adventures of Miss Harriet Simper, of the Colony of Connecticut* (New Haven, 1773).

8. *The Progress of Dulness, Part First: Or, the Rare Adventures of Tom Brainless; showing what his father & mother said of him; how he went to college, and what he learned there; how he took his degree, and went to keeping school; how afterwards he became a great man and wore a wig; and how anybody else may do the same. The like never before published. Very proper to be kept in all Families* (2nd ed., New Haven, 1773).

9. John Trumbull, *Progress of Dulness, Part First*, Preface, and p. 14. The following lines (pp. 8, 10, 11, 13) give its flavor:

Then view our youth with grammar teasing  
Untaught in meaning, sense or reason;  
Of knowledge e're he gain his fill, he  
Must diet long on husks of Lillie,  
Drudge on for weary months in vain,  
By mem'ry's strength, and dint of brain,

. . . . .

And yet how oft the studious gain,  
The dulness of a letter'd brain;  
Despising such low things the while  
As English grammar, phrase and style,  
Despising every nicer art,  
That aids the tongue, or mends the heart:  
Read antient authors o'er in vain,  
Nor taste one beauty they contain:

. . . . .



The good retain: with just discerning  
 Explode the quackeries of learning;  
 Give antient arts their real due,  
 Explain their faults, & beauties too;  
 Teach where to imitate, and mend,  
 And point their uses and their end.

From antient languages well known  
 Transfuse new beauties to our own;  
 With taste and fancy well refin'd  
 Where moral rapture warms the mind,  
 From schools dismiss'd, with lit'ral hand,  
 Spread useful learning o'er the land;  
 And bid the eastern world admire  
 Our rising worth, and bright'ning fire.

See also John Trumbull's M.A. oration, *An Essay on the Use and Advantages of the Fine Arts, Delivered at the Public Commencement in New Haven, September 12, 1770* (New Haven, 1770). He used "fine arts" in the sense of "polite literature."

10. David Avery to E. Wheelock, Dec. 17, 1767, in *Hours at Home*, X, 334 (Feb., 1870); Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, lviii.

11. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xi-xii.

12. Henry P. Johnston, *Nathan Hale* (New Haven, 1914), pp. 211-214.

13. Fitch diary, Aug. 6 & 13, 1775 (quoted in C. Durfee, *Sketch of Ebenezer Fitch*, Boston, 1865, p. 26).

14. Yale Corporation Records (typewritten copy in Secretary's Office), I, 204.

15. Autobiographical memoir prefixed to Trumbull's *Works* (2 vols., 1820), I, 12; Moses C. Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution*, I, 193-307; Dexter, *Biographical Sketches*, III, 252, 254.

16. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xii; M. R. Dutton MS. "Sketch of, and Reflections on, the Life and Character of Doct. Dwight," Yale University Library; W. L. Kingsley, *Yale College: A Sketch of Its History*, I, 96-99; William B. Sprague, *Life of Dwight*, p. 302; Dexter, *Biographical Sketches*, III, 127, 251-257.

17. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 203.

18. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xii; Dutton MS. Sketch of Dwight.

19. The account in this and the following paragraphs is based upon: MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xiii-xv; Dutton MS. Sketch of Dwight.

20. Dr. James Thacher, *A Military Journal* (Boston, 1823), p. 251.

21. [Timothy Dwight], "The Friend," No. I, in *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, I, 42-43 (Mar. 23, 1786), and also the essay misnumbered XII in *Ibid.*, I, 161-163 (July 6, 1786); *President Dwight's Decisions of Questions Discussed by the Senior Class in Yale College, in 1813-14, from Stenographic Notes by Theodore Dwight, Jr.* (Boston, 1833)—hereafter cited as *Dwight's Decisions*—pp. 36, 39; Dutton MS. Sketch of Dwight; MS. Biog. Hints.

22. Letter from Waldo in Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 68.

23. E. A. Park, "Reflections of a Visitor on the Character of Dr. Nathanael Emmons," in *The Works of Nathanael Emmons* (ed. Jacob Ide, Boston, 1842),

I, clxviii; letter from Elam Smalley in Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, I, 704, letter from E. A. Park in *Ibid.*, I, 701.

24. Sarah Stuart Robbins, *Old Andover Days: Memories of a Puritan Childhood* (Boston, 1908), p. 48.

25. Records of the Church of Christ in Yale College, in New Haven, 1757-1817, MS., Yale University Library, p. 20; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xiv; [Denison Olmsted], "Biographical Memoir of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," *Port Folio*, IV, 357 (Nov., 1817).

26. Diary of Ebenezer Fitch quoted in C. Durfee, *Sketch of the Late Rev. Ebenezer Fitch*, p. 24.

27. *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*, Aug. 30, 1775.

28. *Ibid.*, July 5, 1775.

29. *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1775.

30. Diary of Ebenezer Fitch quoted in C. Durfee, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31; Yale Corporation Records (typewritten copy in Secretary's office), I, 206.

33. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 335; Dexter, *Biographical Sketches*, I, 709-712; H. P. Johnston, *Yale and Her Honor Roll in the Revolution* (New York, 1888), pp. 41-44.

34. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 159-160.

35. *Ibid.*, I, 158; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 268-270 (Apr., 1817).

36. Dwight, *A Valedictory Address to the Young Gentlemen, who Commenced Bachelors of Arts at Yale College, July 25, 1776*; Diary of Ebenezer Fitch quoted in C. Durfee, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xiv; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 268-269 (Apr., 1817).

37. Dwight, *A Valedictory Address*, Preface.

38. MS. Biog. Hints; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight of Dedham*, I, 144; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xv; Leonard Bacon, S. W. S. Dutton, and E. W. Robinson, eds., *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut* (New Haven, 1861), p. 412.

39. In 1838 when Mrs. Dwight, then a widow, applied for a pension on the basis of her husband's service in the Revolutionary army, the government insisted that she prove she had been Dwight's wife. Unluckily, the officiating minister had neglected to make a record of the marriage, and all the witnesses were dead. Fortunately, the Secretary of War, Joel R. Poinsett, had spent two years of his boyhood in Dwight's school at Greenfield Hill, and remembered Mr. and Mrs. Dwight as a couple whom God had undoubtedly joined together in an orthodox manner. Several members of the church over which Dwight had presided at Greenfield Hill, testified that their marriage had been a matter of "public notoriety" in that good Connecticut community. Qualified compurgators swore their confidence in the truth of Mrs. Dwight's own declarations made under oath. Official bureaucratic skepticism was finally cleared away, and the widow received her pension. After the panic of 1837 the government apparently guarded its pension funds with superlative, in this case ironical, caution. See Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xv; Depositions of Mrs. Mary Dwight, Jan. 8, 1838, H. W. Edwards, Simeon Baldwin, and Daniel Daggett, Jan. 9, 1838, and letter from Timothy Dwight, Jr., to Joel R. Poinsett, Jan. 10, 1838, U.S. Pension Office, Washington, D.C., No. W 21025, Continental Connecticut Service, filed under "Timothy and Mary Dwight"; B. W. Dwight, *History of Descendants of John Dwight*, author's annotated copy in Yale University Library, I, manuscript insertions between pp. 144 and 145.

40. Yale Corporation Records quoted in W. L. Kingsley, *Yale College*, I, 101; Fitch Diary quoted in C. Durfee, *Sketch of the Late Rev. Ebenezer Fitch*, p. 32; *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. F. B. Dexter, II, 226.

### CHAPTER III—CHAPLAIN IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY

1. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xv; *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. F. B. Dexter, II, 231; *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, ed. Leonard Bacon (New Haven, 1861), p. 373.
2. Deposition of Mrs. Mary Dwight, Jan. 8, 1838; and of Elizur Goodrich, Dec. 27, 1837, U.S. Pension Office, Washington, D.C., No. W 21025, Continental Connecticut Service, filed under "Timothy and Mary Dwight"; Charles S. Hall, *Life and Letters of Samuel Holden Parsons* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1905), p. 163; Putnam to Washington, Oct. 8, 1777, in William F. Livingston, *Israel Putnam, Pioneer, Ranger, and Major-General, 1718-90* (New York, 1901), p. 357.
3. David Humphreys, *Life of the Honorable Major-General Israel Putnam: an essay, Addressed to the State Society of the Cincinnati in Connecticut* (New York, 1810), pp. 170-171, note; Dwight, *Travels* III, 436-438; Samuel Richards, *Diary of Samuel Richards, Captain of Connecticut Line, War of the Revolution, 1775-1781* (Philadelphia, 1909), pp. 48-53; Putnam to Washington, in W. F. Livingston, *Israel Putnam*, pp. 355-357; Gen. G. S. Silliman's letter quoted in Henry P. Johnston, *Yale and Her Honor Roll in the American Revolution, 1775-1783, Including Original Letters, Record of Service and Biographical Sketches* (New York, 1888), p. 81.
4. H. P. Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 68; *Record of Service of Connecticut Men in War of the Revolution*, ed. H. P. Johnston (Hartford, 1889), p. 144; C. S. Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, p. 163.
5. Affidavit by Timothy Dwight, Jr., Jan. 8, 1838, in *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 144-145; Dwight, *Travels*, III, 491; Otto Hufeland, *Westchester County During the American Revolution, 1775-1783* (privately printed, 1926), p. 235.
6. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 491-492, IV, 333; David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, pp. 166, 173-174; *General Orders of Major-General Israel Putnam When in Command of the Highlands in 1777*, ed. Worthington C. Ford (Brooklyn, 1893), pp. 43, 77-79, 85 and *passim*; Hufeland, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-255, 183-184, 187, 214, 236-237, 247 ff. (valuable for quotations from contemporary sources).
7. Parsons to Laurens and to Tryon, in C. S. Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, pp. 128-129, 132; *Diary of Samuel Richards*, pp. 77-83.
8. David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, pp. 175-176.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-176; W. F. Livingston, *Israel Putnam*, p. 366.
10. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 491-492, IV, 333.
11. David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, p. 177; Dwight, *Travels*, III, 509-510, note; W. F. Livingston, *Israel Putnam*, p. 366; Hufeland, *Westchester County*, pp. 201-206; Journal of William Wheeler in Cornelia P. Lathrop, *Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield, Connecticut* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 34-36.
12. Putnam to Tryon, in Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, p. 169; *General Orders of Israel Putnam*, pp. 15, 17, 23, 43, 52; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight*, p. 9.
13. *Diary of Samuel Richards*, pp. 53-56; David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, pp. 177-179; Diary of Nathan Beers, quoted in William S. Thomas, *West Point in the Revolution* (1923), pp. 57-58.



14. *Diary of Samuel Richards*, pp. 54 ff., 64-65, 105; Parsons to Washington, Dec. 29, 1777, in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, pp. 136-137; Putnam to Washington, Feb. 13, 1778, in W. F. Livingston, *Israel Putnam*, pp. 370-372; David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, pp. 178-179.

15. See C. S. Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*.

16. C. S. Hall, *op. cit.*, pp. 165, 175; H. P. Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 258; MS. Biog. Hints; *Diary of Samuel Richards*, p. 57; Deposition of Samuel Richards, Jan. 4, 1838, U.S. Pension Office, Washington, D.C., No. W 21025, filed under "Timothy and Mary Dwight"; James Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 138; J. T. Headley, *Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution* (New York, 1864), pp. 291, 293-299. Headley bases his account of Avery on the latter's diary, which he quotes, and upon family stories, but he is not always accurate as to details. Extracts from Avery's diary while chaplain in the Revolution from March to May, 1776, are printed in the *American Monthly Magazine*, vol. XVIII, 113-117, 235-240 (1901). For Avery's later stormy career see F. B. Dexter, *Biog. Sketches*, III, 305 ff.

17. Dwight, *Travels*, III, pp. 431-435.

18. Parsons to Wadsworth, Feb. 22, 1778, in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, pp. 161-162.

19. Malcom to Parsons, Aug. 3, 1778, *Ibid.*, p. 185.

20. James Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 131.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 137-138.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 138, 151-152.

23. *Historical Magazine*, IV, 123 (Apr., 1860); C. S. Hall, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-165; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 142-143, note; Washington to Dwight, Mar. 18, 1778, original MS. in the possession of Dr. E. S. Dwight of Smyrna, Del.

24. Published in [E. H. Smith], *American Poems* (Litchfield, Conn., 1793).

25. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvi.

26. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvi; S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 351, note.

27. [Timothy Dwight], *A Sermon, preached at Stamford, in Connecticut, upon the General Thanksgiving, Dec. 18, 1777* (Hartford, 1778).

This is probably the sermon to which S. G. Goodrich (*Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 351, note) refers in a story which he says he got from "the venerable Col. Platt" many years after. The Colonel was apparently too venerable by the time Goodrich heard it, and must have confused his dates or his sermons. Goodrich's version states that one of Dwight's sermons, "intended to raise the drooping courage of the country when Burgoyne had come down from Canada with his army, and was carrying all before him," was published and a copy reached the little garrison at Fort Stanwix on the Mohawk River. Fort Stanwix was then being besieged by Sir John Johnson, one of St. Leger's officers. According to Goodrich, the sermon was read to the garrison at this black moment and so inspired them that they made a sally which completely routed their besiegers, thus delivering Albany from immediate danger and contributing materially to the defeat of the British in their campaign of 1777. The story is obviously confused because the siege of Fort Stanwix occurred before Burgoyne's surrender and before Dwight delivered this sermon at Stamford. No other sermon by Dwight was published at that time, and this one bears the imprint, 1778. H. P. Johnston (*op. cit.*, pp. 258-259) and M. C. Tyler (*Three Men of Letters*, pp. 81-82, footnote 1—New York, 1895) both failed to locate this sermon, probably

because it was published anonymously and is rare. Hence both were baffled by Goodrich's story. Johnston could find no copy of it, but there is now one in the Yale University Library. Statements by two of Dwight's sons, one made under oath, show that their father wrote it. See MS. Biog. Hints, and an affidavit by Timothy Dwight, Jr., dated Jan. 8, 1838, a copy of which is inserted in B. W. Dwight's annotated copy of his *History of Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 144-145. William L. Stone, *Ballads and Poems Relating to the Burgoyne Campaign* (Albany, 1893), p. 125, note, gives a garbled, inaccurate story concerning the same sermon by Dwight. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 191-199, has an interesting account of the siege of Fort Stanwix.

28. Burgoyne's proclamation is reprinted from the *Connecticut Journal* of Aug. 27, 1777, in W. L. Stone, *Ballads and Poems Relating to the Burgoyne Campaign*, pp. 285-288. See also Dwight, *Travels*, III, 220.

29. MS. Biog. Hints; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 270 (Apr., 1817); David Avery to David McClure, May 23, 1778, MS., McClure Papers in Dartmouth College Library. J. T. Headley, *Chaplains and Clergy of the American Revolution*, pp. 182-185, is inaccurate in some details. Joseph S. Clark, *A Historical Sketch of Congregational Churches in Massachusetts, from 1620 to 1858* (Boston, 1858), pp. 206-211, and Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham, 1928), describe the influence of the New England clergy at that time. A sermon preached on the same occasion by Dwight's friend and fellow chaplain is on a similar theme: David Avery, *The Lord is to be praised for the Triumphs of his Power—A Sermon, Preached at Greenwich, in Connecticut, on the 18th of December, 1777. Being a General Thanksgiving . . .* (Norwich, 1778). See also the references in footnote 27, above. Dwight also celebrated Burgoyne's defeat in a poem, an unpublished copy of which is among the McClure Papers in the Dartmouth College Library. It contained the same ideas which Dwight expressed much more successfully in prose in his sermon. The concluding lines of the poem indicate its tone and quality:

We'll beat British Neroes  
& triumph like heroes  
Or die.

30. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvi; [Denison Olmsted], "Biographical Memoir of President Dwight," in *Port Folio*, IV, 357-358 (Nov., 1817); *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 270 (Apr., 1817).

31. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 435-436; *Diary of Samuel Richards*, pp. 56-57, 105.

32. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 430-435, prints letter written at the time.

33. *Ibid.*, III, 429-430, 434.

34. *Ibid.*, III, 343-344, 345-346; *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 105, 333-338.

35. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvi.

36. Quoted in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, p. 200.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-204; *Diary of Samuel Richards*, pp. 56-61; David Humphreys, *Life of Israel Putnam*, pp. 180-181.

38. Dwight's letter of Oct. 1, 1778, quoted in affidavit of Jan. 8, 1838, by Timothy Dwight, Jr., a copy of which is inserted in B. W. Dwight's annotated copy of his *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 144-145; Deposition of Mrs. Mary Dwight, Aug. 31, 1842, U.S. Pension Office, Washington, D.C., Continental Connecticut Service, No. W 21025, filed under "Timothy and Mary Dwight."

39. Dwight to Parsons, Apr. 23, 1779, and Feb. 28, 1781, in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, pp. 237, 339; *Records of Connecticut Men in the Revolution*, ed. H. P. Johnston, p. 314; Bernard C. Steiner, *A History of the Plantation of Menunkatuck and of the Original Town of Guilford, Connecticut* (Baltimore, 1897), p. 431.

40. Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight*, p. 9; Denison Olmsted, "Timothy Dwight as a Teacher" in *American Journal of Education*, Sept., 1858, p. 577; [Denison Olmsted], "Biographical Memoir of President Timothy Dwight," in *Port Folio*, IV, 358 (Nov., 1817); MS. Biog. Hints; Dwight, *Travels*, II, 34, III, 142-145; H. P. Johnston, *Yale . . . in the Revolution*, p. 160; Timothy Dwight, *A Discourse Delivered at New Haven, Feb. 22, 1800, on the Character of George Washington, Esq. at the Request of the Citizens* (New Haven, 1800), p. 39, note. Concerning Dwight's interest in human character see his essays "The Friend," Nos. I and XI (misnumbered XII), in *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, I, 42-43, 161-163 (Mar. 23 and July 6, 1786); also *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 36, 39, and Dwight, *Travels*, *passim*.

#### CHAPTER IV—RESPONSIBILITIES IN NORTHAMPTON

1. MS. Biog. Hints; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 132-133.  
2. James R. Trumbull, *History of Northampton* (Northampton, 1898-1902), II, 336, 372-373.

3. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 306-316; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvii; MS. Biog. Hints; Anthony Haswell, *Memoirs and Adventures of Captain Matthew Phelps* (Bennington, Vt., 1802), pp. 56-72, Appendix pp. 7-17; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 120-125, 132-133, 212-215, 218-219; S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 350.

4. *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 218-219; Trumbull, *History of Northampton*, II, 374.

5. *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 135-136.

6. MS. Biog. Hints.

7. Dwight to Parsons, Northampton, Apr. 23, 1779, in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, p. 237.

8. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 231, IV, 369-370. For a brief discussion of economic conditions in Massachusetts at this time see R. V. Harlow, "Economic Conditions in Massachusetts During the American Revolution," in *Colonial Society of Massachusetts Publications*, XX, 163-190.

9. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvii-xix; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 145; S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 35, note.

10. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xviii; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 145; Thomas A. Merrill, *Semi-Centennial Sermon at Middlebury* (Middlebury, Vt., 1841), p. 91; Samuel Swift, *History of Town of Middlebury*, (Middlebury, 1859), pp. 238-240; Cyrus Yale, *Life of Jeremiah Hallock* (New York, 1828), pp. 24-26; Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 229 ff; Heman Humphrey, *Revival Sketches and Manual* (New York, 1859), p. 124; Timothy Dwight, *Discourse in Commemoration of Rev. Timothy Dwight* (Southport, Conn., 1876), p. 52; T. A. Zunder, *The Early Days of Joel Barlow* (New Haven, 1934), pp. 82, 86, 88.

11. *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. F. B. Dexter, I, 368-369; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xviii.



12. *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, II, 231; *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, ed. Leonard Bacon, p. 373.
13. *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, II, 449-450, 512, 529, 531, III, 273-275; David Avery to David McClure, Bennington, Vt., Aug. 16, 1780, in the McClure Papers in the Dartmouth College Library.
14. *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, II, 557, 561, III, 3-4.
15. *Ibid.*, II, 422-423, 438, 451, 538.
16. *Ibid.*, II, 531.
17. *Ibid.*, II, 529 (note 2), 530 (note 3), 538 (note 1), III, 98 (note 1), 393-394 (note 3), I, 1-2.
18. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 231, II, 275-276, IV, 369-370; Trumbull, *History of Northampton*, II, 454.
19. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xix-xx; *Joseph Hawley's Criticism of the Constitution of Massachusetts*, ed. Mary C. Clune (Northampton, Mass., 1917), III, 10-11, 41; Trumbull, *History of Northampton*, II, 427-428, 454; S. E. Morison, "The Struggle over the Adoption of the Constitution of Massachusetts, 1780," in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, May, 1917, L, 353-411 (May, 1917); Harry A. Cushing, *History of the Transition from Provincial to Commonwealth Government in Massachusetts* (New York, 1896), pp. 227-279.
20. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xix-xx; *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 131, 187-188; [Denison Olmsted], "Biographical Memoir of the Rev. Timothy Dwight" in *Port Folio*, IV, 357, 358 (Nov., 1817); *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 145.
21. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xx.
22. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xx; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 399-401; *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 135-139; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 271 (Apr., 1817).
23. MS. Biog. Hints; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xx-xxi; Greenfield Church Records, photostat copy in Fairfield Historical Society, III, 113; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 145; Nathaniel Gorman to Dwight, Philadelphia, May 21, 1783, MS., New York Public Library.
24. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xvii-xviii.
25. Madame Rhoda Dwight, quoted in *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 135.
26. Lewis Tappan, quoted in *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 138.
27. *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 136-137.
28. *Ibid.*, I, 136-137, 139.
29. Dwight to Parsons, Northampton, Feb. 28, 1781, in Hall, *Life and Letters of S. H. Parsons*, p. 329.

## CHAPTER V—GREENFIELD HILL

1. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 520; Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church*, p. 48.
2. Greenfield Hill Church Records, photostatic copy, Fairfield Historical Society, III, 113, 116, 118, 121.
3. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 345-346, IV, 416-417, 422, note.

4. Jonathan Edwards, *The Faithful Manifestation of the Truth, the proper and immediate end of preaching the Gospel—a Sermon delivered November 5, 1783, at the ordination of the reverend Mr. Timothy Dwight to the pastoral office over the Church in Greenfield*, pp. 19, 24; "Journal of William Wheeler" in *Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield, Connecticut*, ed. Cornelia P. Lathrop, pp. 27, 34.

5. Greenfield Hill Church Records, III, 113.

6. Records of the Fairfield West Consociation, Nov. 4 and 5, 1783; Jedidiah Morse to his father, Nov. 1, 1783 (MS., Yale University Library).

7. Records of the Fairfield West Consociation, Nov. 4 and 5, 1783; Asa C. Pierce, "Historical Address," *150th Anniversary of the Consociations, Fairfield East & West* (June 8, 1886), p. 29; Dwight, *Travels*, III, 520.

8. Gardiner Spring, *Oration . . . in Commemoration of Timothy Dwight* (New York, 1817), p. 27. For a brief, clear account of the development of the Half-Way Covenant practice, see Williston Walker, *History of Congregational Churches in the United States* (2nd ed., New York, 1897), pp. 170-182.

9. S. W. S. Dutton, *History of North Church, New Haven* (New Haven, 1842), p. 63.

10. Dwight to the Society of Greenfield, July 20, 1783, Greenfield Hill Church Records.

11. Spring, *loc. cit.*

12. Dwight to J. Ingersoll, June 24, 1795, quoted in Eben E. Beardsley, *The History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut* (2 vols., New York, 1865), II, 212, note.

13. [Heman Humphrey], Review of Dwight's *Sermons*, in *The Spirit of the Pilgrims*, II (1829), 318. See Dwight, *Theology* (Sermons 159, 160), V, 320-362; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 437; Samuel Merwin, *Discourse on Completion of Fifty Years in the Ministry* (New Haven, 1855), p. 14.

14. Jonathan Edwards, *The Faithful Manifestation of the Truth, the proper and immediate end of preaching the Gospel—a Sermon delivered November 5, 1783, at the ordination of the reverend Mr. Timothy Dwight to the pastoral office over the Church in Greenfield*.

15. Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 51.

16. MS. Biog. Hints; Humphrey to his son, June 23, 1849, *N. Y. Evangelist*, July 15, 1849.

17. MS. Biog. Hints.

18. Henry B. Smith, "Historical Discourse delivered at 150th Anniversary of the Formation of Greenfield Church," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (Southport, 1876), p. 31.

19. Ashbel Green, *Life of Ashbel Green* (New York, 1849), p. 210.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211, 212-213.

21. Uriah Bulkley, *Musings of Memory*, MS., Fairfield Hist. Soc.; Dwight's *Decisions*, pp. 86-87.

22. Brigham to Sprague, Sept. 15, 1855, Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 263.

23. H. B. Smith, *Historical Discourse at 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 24; John W. Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections* (New Haven, 1836), p. 357; S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 349, note; Greenfield Hill Church Records, III, 124; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 363.

24. Greenfield Hill Church Records, III, 116, 123, 126.
25. Greenfield Hill Church Records, III, 115, 116, 117, 121-122; Timothy Cooley, *The Granville Jubilee* (Springfield, 1845), pp. 43-77; Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 261, 370-371; *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, I, 136 (June 8, 1786).
26. MS. Records of Fairfield West Association (Congregational House, Hartford, Conn.).
27. *Ibid.*, May 26, 1789.
28. *Ibid.*, May 31, 1791, Oct. 11, 1791, May 29, 1792, Oct. 9, 1792; *Records of General Assoc. of Conn., 1738-1799* (Hartford, 1888), pp. 138, 142.
29. *Records of General Assoc. of Conn., (1738-1799)*, pp. 127, 128, 129, 133; MS. Records of Fairfield West Consociation (Congregational House, Hartford, Conn.), *passim*.
30. MS. Records of the Fairfield West Assoc. (Congregational House, Hartford, Conn.), May 27, 1788, October 4, 1788, and *passim*.
31. *Op. cit.*, May 26, 1789, Oct. 13, 1789, May 25, 1790, May 31, 1791; *Records of General Assoc. of Conn., 1738-1799*, pp. 131, 138, 143, 146, 149, 152, 161, 170, 176, 186.
32. Timothy Dwight, *A Discourse on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament: Delivered at New Haven, Sept. 10, 1793, at the Annual Lecture, Appointed by the General Association of Connecticut: On the Tuesday before the Public Commencement* (New York, 1794). See the "Advertisement." For a review of this sermon see the *Columbian Centinel*, Boston, Nov. 5, 1794, p. 1.
33. *Records of the General Assoc. of Conn., 1738-1799*, pp. 156-157.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
35. Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 54; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiv.
36. Dwight, *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven*, p. 34.
37. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 434.
38. MS. Records of Fairfield West Assoc., pp. 20, 28; *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History of Conn.*, ed. L. Bacon, p. 301; Ashbel Green, *Life of Ashbel Green*, p. 197; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiv.
39. *Records of the General Association of Conn., 1738-1799*, pp. 133, 137, 140-143, 145, 149, 152, 154-155, 165, 170, 176; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiv; Ashbel Green, *Life of Ashbel Green*, pp. 197-198; *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. F. B. Dexter, III, 431; T. D. Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, pp. 125, 296-297.
40. Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 55; T. D. Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, pp. 299-301; Williston Walker, *A History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (2nd ed., New York, 1897), pp. 316-319.
41. *American Museum*, V, 408-409, 302-303 (Apr. and Mar., 1789).
42. Published in 1793.
43. *American Museum*, 1787.
44. Printed anonymously in 1788.
45. 1786, *passim*.
46. 1789, *passim*.



47. For example see his *Virtuous Rulers a National Blessing. A Sermon preached at the General Election, May 12th., 1791* (Hartford, 1791); *A Discourse on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament* (New York, 1794); *The True Means of Establishing Public Happiness* (New Haven, 1795).
48. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiii-xxiv.
49. Dwight, *Greenfield Hill; a Poem, in seven parts* (New York, 1794), Part V, 110; Dwight, *Travels*, III, 263; Henry Bronson, *History of Waterbury* (Waterbury, Conn., 1858), p. 372; H. B. Smith, *Historical Discourse at 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 20.
50. Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, Part V, 110.
51. Samuel Davis' Diary of his journey from Plymouth to New York in 1789, MS., Mass. Historical Soc. Library.
52. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiii; MS. Biog. Hints; Dwight, *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven*, pp. 19-25; Dwight, *Travels*, II, 511-512, 515-516.
53. Dwight, *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven*, pp. 22, 23, 46, 47; *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 146, marginal note in author's annotated copy; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 103, 105-110, 375-377, 381-386.
54. N. W. Taylor to Sprague, Feb. 20, 1844, in William Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 160-161.
55. William Sprague, *Life of Dwight*, pp. 266-269.
56. Samuel Davis, MS. diary, Mass. Hist. Soc. Library; William Dunlap's Diary (Collections of N. Y. Historical Soc., vols. LXII-LXIV, 1929-1931), I, 206-207, 214-215.
57. Uriah Bulkley, "Musings of Memory," MS., Fairfield Historical Soc.
58. Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, pp. 23-27, 41, 49-50.

## CHAPTER VI—DWIGHT'S ACADEMY

1. Greenfield Hill Church Records. These also contain salary receipts signed by Dwight.
2. *Connecticut Journal*, Dec. 31, 1783, p. 4.
3. Uriah Bulkley, "Musings of Memory," MS., Fairfield Historical Soc.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Mrs. Mary Milbank and G. W. Banks, quoted in G. H. Merwin, *The Schools of Greenfield Through Two Centuries* (Fairfield, Conn., 1925), pp. 17-20.
6. *New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine*, I, 150 (June 22, 1786).
7. Bill to Daniel Sherwood in Dwight's handwriting, in Cyrus Bradley Scrapbook, p. 22, Pequot Library, Southport, Conn.
8. Dwight to Ebenezer Barnard, Feb. 21, 1792, MS., Conn. Historical Soc. Library.
9. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 347, IV, 298.
10. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxi.
11. Bulkley, *op. cit.*
12. Denison Olmsted, "Analysis of the Character of President Dwight as a Teacher," *American Journal of Education*, V, 581 (1858); Theodore Dwight to Timothy Dwight, 1794, MS., courtesy of Miss Inglis Griswold of New York.

13. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxi-xxii; William T. Dwight, "Memoir of Sereno E. Dwight," *Select Discourses of S. E. Dwight* (Boston, 1851), p. x.
14. Day to Twining, Oct. 3, 1795, *Yale Alumni Weekly*, Jan. 6, 1928, p. 431.
15. Dwight to Leffingwell, Jan. 3, 1782, MS., Boston Public Library.
16. Dwight to Ebenezer Barnard, Feb. 21, 1792, MS., Conn. Historical Soc. Library.
17. Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, pp. 133-134.
18. Olmsted to Sprague, in William Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 160.
19. A. M. Fisher, MS. notes on Dwight's farewell address to class of 1813, Fisher Papers, Vol. II, Yale University Library.
20. *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 149-155.
21. A. M. Fisher, MS. notes on Dwight's farewell address to class of 1813, Fisher Papers, Vol. II, Yale University Library.
22. Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, pp. 132-133.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 137-140.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 136, 140.
26. *Winthrop's Journal*, ed. J. K. Hosmer (N.Y., 1908), II, 225.
27. Timothy Dwight, "Education of Women at Yale," *The Forum*, XIII, 451 (June, 1892).
28. Dwight to Timothy Dwight, June 1, 1798, MS. owned by the Misses Julia and Marion Dwight of Brookline, Mass.; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxii; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 475-476.
29. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 475-476.
30. Dwight, *Statistical Account of the City of New Haven* (1811), p. 41; Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, p. 132.
31. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 476-477.
32. Mrs. Shippen to Nancy Shippen, Sept. 22 and Nov. 8, 1777, in E. Armes, *Nancy Shippen: Her Journal Book*, pp. 40-43.
33. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 512-519.
34. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 512-519; Dwight, *Greenfield Hill*, pp. 48-49; *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 290 (Apr., 1817).
35. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 477.
36. *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 42-43; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 476.
37. *Dwight's Decisions*, p. 41; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 475-476.
38. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxii; Timothy Dwight, "Education for Women at Yale," *The Forum*, XIII, 452-453 (June, 1892).
39. Elizabeth Whitman to Joel Barlow, July 1, and Dec. 18, 1779, in Mrs. C. W. H. Dall, *The Romance of the Association* (Cambridge, Mass., 1875), pp. 92, 96.
40. Denison Olmsted, "Analysis of the Character of President Dwight As a Teacher," *American Journal of Education*, V, 581 (1858).
41. Mrs. Mary Dwight to Dwight, Sept. 6, 1795, MS. owned by Prof. H. B. Dwight.
42. Dwight to Philip Van Rensselaer, Mar. 16, 1795, MS., N.Y. Historical Soc. Library.

43. *Ibid.* See also Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxiv-xxv; *History of Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 148, marginal note in author's annotated copy; First Church (Reformed), Albany, N.Y., Minutes of the Consistory, II (1790-1799), Feb. 20, 1795.

44. Repeated to me by Miss Geraldine Woolsey Carmalt; see also Theodore S. Woolsey, *Theodore Dwight Woolsey, His Early Years* (New Haven, 1912), p. 13, which suggests the probable authenticity of the verse.

45. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxv; "Biographical Notice of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 275 (Apr., 1817); J. L. Kingsley, "Sketch of History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 201 (Feb., 1836); Sally to Thomas Robbins, June 23, 1795, and Timothy Bishop to Thomas Robbins, Jan. 11, 1796, MSS., Robbins Papers, Conn. Historical Soc.

46. Printed in E. E. Beardsley, *History of Episcopal Church in Conn.*, II, 212, note.

47. Yale College Register, pp. 395, 399, 400.

48. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxii, xxv; "Biographical Notice of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," *loc. cit.*; Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), pp. 51-52; William T. Dwight, Memoir of Sereno E. Dwight in *Select Discourses of Sereno E. Dwight*, p. x.

49. Greenfield Hill Church Records.

50. Fairfield West Consociation Records, Aug. 11, 1795 (MSS., Congregational House, Hartford, Conn.).

51. Greenfield Hill Church Records.

52. Yale Corporation Records (typed copy in Secretary's Office), I, 330.

53. Report to General Assembly by its committee on the Representation & Memorial of the President & Fellows of Yale College, Oct. 21, 1795, Connecticut Archives, College & Schools, Series II, 1718-1820, I, MS. 62 (Connecticut State Library).

54. Greenfield Hill Church Records; Yale Prudential Committee minutes, Oct. 22, 1795, Yale Corp. Records (typed copy in Secretary's Office), I, 341.

55. *History of Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 148, marginal note in author's annotated copy; Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), p. 58.

56. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 197-198, III, 511, 515.

## CHAPTER VII—PRESIDENT OF YALE

1. Diary of John Pierce, Mass. Historical Soc., *Proceedings*, Series 2, III, 45-47; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 8, 1795; diary of Benjamin Silliman, Sept. 8, 1795, MS., Yale Univ. Library; *American Mercury* (Hartford, Conn.), Sept. 21, 1795, p. 3; J. L. Kingsley, "A Sketch of the History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 32, 201 (Aug., 1835, and Feb., 1836).

2. Diary of John Pierce, p. 46.

3. *American Mercury*, *loc. cit.*; Diary of John Pierce, pp. 46-47.

4. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxv; George P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman* (New York, 1866), I, 39.



5. Diary of John Pierce, pp. 47-48; Diary of Samuel Davis, Mass. Historical Soc., *Proc.* (1869-1870), p. 15; Theodore D. Bacon, *Leonard Bacon, A Statesman of the Church* (New Haven, 1931), p. 68; Leonard Bacon, "Remembrance of Forty Years," *Four Commemorative Discourses* (New Haven, 1866), pp. 27 ff.; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 183-184, 191-193; Benjamin Silliman, *An Address Delivered Before the Association of the Alumni of Yale College, in New Haven, August 17, 1842* (New Haven, 1842), pp. 29-30.

6. Diary of Samuel Davis, p. 15.

7. Only one was completed before Dwight's death; in 1821 the Episcopal Church was hailed as the only "correct" specimen of Gothic in the United States, Dwight, *Travels*, I, 184-185; Samuel Merwin, *A Discourse on the Completion of Fifty Years Service in the Ministry* (New Haven, 1855), p. 55; T. D. Bacon, *Leonard Bacon*, p. 68.

8. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 183-184.

9. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 187.

10. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 188-190, 193-197; Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, p. 29.

11. Timothy Dwight, *A Statistical Account of New Haven*, p. 72.

12. This paragraph and the four following are based on MS. correspondence to Thomas Robbins, 1795-1796, in Robbins Papers, Connecticut Historical Society; and Benjamin Silliman's MS. diary, July, 1795 to May, 1796, in Yale University Library.

13. Yale Corporation Records.

14. Yale Corporation Records.

15. It was not until Sept. 11, 1804, that the Corporation resolved "that the President, Professors, and Tutors of this College be styled, the Faculty of this College" (Yale Corporation Records).

16. Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, pp. 19-21.

17. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 14, 1803.

18. [John C. Ogden], *Friendly Remarks to the People of Connecticut Upon their College and Schools* (n.p., 1799), pp. 5-6, and notes written on the margins and fly leaf of the copy in the Yale University Library.

19. Memorial of the President and Fellows of Yale College to the General Assembly, Oct. 7, 1795, and the Report of the General Assembly's committee thereon, Oct. 21, 1795, Connecticut Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, Vol. I, MSS. 62, 64 (Connecticut State Library, Hartford). According to Lyman Beecher, the stairs in Connecticut Hall were "worn nearly through, the rooms defaced and dirty" (*Autobiography, Correspondence, etc.*, of Lyman Beecher, ed. Charles Beecher, New York, 1871, I, 39).

20. Dwight to Jedidiah Morse, June 29, 1797, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 205; Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 122; Yale Corporation Records.

21. Yale Corporation Records.

22. Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 86; Benjamin Silliman to Jonathan Knight, May 18, 1812, MS., Yale University Library.

23. Yale Corporation Records.

24. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Dec. 26, 27, 30, 1798 (courtesy of Mr. Steven T. Byington).

25. Dwight to Jedidiah Morse, Jan. 10, 1809, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.

26. Dwight to David Humphreys, Dec. 18, 1799, MS., Yale University Library. The architect was probably a Mr. Bonner who designed the Lyceum—see Silliman's Reminiscences in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 122-123; Yale Corporation Records; Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, pp. 17, 20; Lease to Nathan Beers, Dec. 11, 1799, MS., Baldwin Papers, Yale University Library; J. L. Kingsley, "Sketch of the History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 204 (Feb., 1836); Representation of the President and Fellows of Yale College to the General Assembly, undated [1801?], Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MSS. 71a, 72, 75, 76.

27. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 204-205.

28. Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, p. 21.

29. Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MSS. 65h, 66a; James Hillhouse to Dwight, May 10, 1796 (MS. owned by Dr. E. S. Dwight of Smyrna, Del.); Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xl-xli; Kingsley, *op. cit.*, p. 205; Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of the Life and Character of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," in *Transactions of the 150th Anniversary of the Greenfield, Conn., Congregational Church, held May 18, 1876* (Southport, 1876), p. 64.

30. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 206-207.

31. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 207.

32. Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address, etc.," pp. 64-65; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of Life and Character of President Dwight*, p. 37, note.

33. For example, in 1779 the Corporation voted to President Stiles "the immemorial perquisite of two shillings lawful money for affixing the college seal to diplomas" (Corp. Records). The President also received the use of a house and lot, kept in repair by the Corporation. Dwight cultivated a garden at New Haven as he had done at Greenfield Hill. In 1795 the Corporation fixed the salary of the Professor of Divinity at \$670, also giving him the use of a house and lot.

34. Dwight to Timothy Dwight, June 1, 1798—MS. in possession of Miss Marion Dwight of Brookline, Mass., to whom I am indebted for a photostatic copy.

35. *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. F. B. Dexter, II, 233; F. B. Dexter, "An Historical Study of the Powers and Duties of the Presidency in Yale College," in *American Antiquarian Society, Proceedings*, N.S., XII, 37-38 (1897-1898).

36. Kingsley, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

37. MS. Biog. Hints.

38. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1810; MS. Biog. Hints.

39. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1801.

40. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1804.

41. S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime* (New York, 1856), I, 122-123, 530-531; Remonstrance to President Thomas Jefferson by merchants of New Haven, MS., undated, Abraham Bishop Papers, New Haven Colony Historical Society; Daniel Read to Warren Dutton, July 30, 1801, Read's Letter book, No. 54, pp. 299-300, MS., New Haven Colony Historical Society.

42. Kingsley, *op. cit.*, p. 202; F. B. Dexter, *Sketch of the History of Yale University* (New York, 1887), pp. 50, 52, 62-63.

43. Yale Corporation Records: Sept. 9, 1802; Sept. 10, 1804; Sept. 10, 1805; Sept. 12, 1806; Sept. 11, 1810. Jeremiah Day to Silliman, Sept. 30, 1805; G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 204-207; Kingsley, *op. cit.*, p. 203; Thomas A. Thacher, *A Discourse Commemorative of Professor James L. Kingsley* (New York, 1852), pp. 26-27.

44. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 12, 1798.
45. The following account of the establishment of the Chemistry department is based upon Silliman's *Reminiscences* in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 89 ff., unless otherwise indicated.
46. Josiah Meigs to the Corporation of Yale College, Sept. 11 and 13, 1798, and Meigs to Jeremiah Day, July 2, 1821, MSS., Yale University Library; Abraham Bishop, *Oration Delivered at Wallingford on the 11th of March, 1801* (New Haven, 1801), p. 51, note; *American Mercury*, Aug. 1, 1805, p. 2; William M. Meigs, *Life of Josiah Meigs* (Philadelphia, 1887), pp. 38 ff.; F. B. Dexter, *Biog. Sketches*, IV, 45.
47. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 9, 1802.
48. J. L. Kingsley to Silliman, Feb. 18, 1802, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 113.
49. Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, pp. 24-25.
50. Silliman's *Reminiscences*, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 125-127.
51. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1804.
52. Silliman's *Reminiscences*, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 128-129.
53. Silliman to his brother, Jan. 24, 1805, and his *Reminiscences*, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 127-129, 133-134, 197, II, 67-68.
54. Silliman to Jeremiah Day, July 9 and Aug. 22, 1805, and to J. L. Kingsley, July 26, 1805, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 200, 203 (see also I, 143, 193-195).
55. Silliman to Kingsley, Jan. 29, 1806, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 210.
56. Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 161-172.
57. *Ibid.*, I, 214, 216-219.
58. *Ibid.*, I, 219-220.
59. *Ibid.*, I, 220-221; J. L. Kingsley, "Sketch of History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 204 (1836).
60. Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 214-216, 218-219, 256-260, 278-281; Kingsley, *loc. cit.*; B. B. Edwards, *Memoir of the Rev. Elias Cornelius* (Boston, 1833), pp. 16-17; Silliman to Jonathan Knight, Jan. 29, 1812, and to M. F. Cogswell, Mar. 29, 1812, MSS., Yale University Library; Connecticut Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 87.
61. Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 241-243, 265.
62. *Ibid.*, I, 49, 129-130, 265.
63. "Act Incorporating a Medical Society," *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Connecticut Medical Society, from 1792 to 1829 Inclusive* (Hartford, 1884), pp. vi-ix.
64. Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of Life and Character of President Dwight*, pp. 27-28; Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 260; MS. Biog. Hints.
65. *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Conn. Medical Soc., 1792-1829*, p. 77 (May 14, 1800).
66. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 12, 1806; Silliman's *Reminiscences*, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 260; *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Conn. Medical Soc., 1792-1829*, p. 133 (May 20-21, 1807).
67. *Reprint of the Proceedings of the Conn. Medical Soc., 1792-1829*, pp. 138-139 (Oct. 14-15, 1807), 143 (May 18-19, 1808), 148 (Oct. 19-20, 1808), 154 (Oct. 18-19, 1809), 161 (Oct. 17-18, 1810); Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1810.
68. Petition to General Assembly by President and Fellows of the Medical Society, Oct. 20, 1810, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 102.



69. *Ibid.*, MSS. 105, 106.

70. *Ibid.*, MSS. 103, 106; William L. Kingsley, *Yale College: A Sketch of Its History*, II, 63.

71. Jonathan Knight later testified (*A Lecture Introductory to the Course of Lectures in the Medical Institution of Yale College*, New Haven, 1853, p. 13) that the results of the cooperation between the college and the Medical Society were "eminently happy," with each regarding the other as a "fellow laborer in the endeavor to promote and advance the interest of medical science." The thoroughness of the examination given by the joint committee is indicated by Knight's letter of May 13, 1815, to Dr. M. F. Cogswell (MS., Yale University Library), in which he says that the examination continued for three days "with as little loss of time as last year," beginning immediately after breakfast and ending at nine o'clock at night.

72. Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MSS. 103, 106.

73. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1811, and April 29, 1812; Benjamin Silliman to M. F. Cogswell, Mar. 29 and Nov. 3, 1812, MSS., Yale University Library.

74. Oliver P. Hubbard, *The Early History of the New Hampshire Medical Institution, with a Sketch of Its Founder, Nathan Smith* (Washington, D.C., 1880); Jonathan Knight, *A Eulogium on Nathan Smith, Pronounced at His Funeral* (New Haven, 1829); Emily A. Smith, *The Life and Letters of Nathan Smith* (New Haven, 1914), Chaps. I-XII.

75. Timothy L. Gridley to Jonathan Knight, Nov. 20, 1810, MS., Yale University Library.

76. Benjamin Silliman to Jonathan Knight, Dec. 22, 1812, MS., Yale University Library.

77. *Ibid.*

78. Quoted in Emily A. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

79. Benjamin Silliman to M. F. Cogswell, Nov. 3, 1812, and to Jonathan Knight, Dec. 22, 1812, MSS., Yale University Library; Hubbard, *op. cit.*, p. 22. It is interesting to note that in 1940 the Mississippi Senate passed a bill barring atheists, infidels, and "all un-Americans" from teaching in Mississippi schools (*New York Times*, Mar. 20, 1940).

80. Henry Bronson, "Medical History and Biography," *New Haven Colony Historical Society, Papers* (1877), II, 272.

81. *Ibid.*, II, 304-305.

82. Silliman's Reminiscences, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 261.

83. Silliman to Knight, May 18 and Dec. 22, 1812, and to M. F. Cogswell, Nov. 3, 1812, MSS., Yale University Library.

84. Yale Corporation Records, Aug. 31, 1813.

85. Jonathan Knight to Benjamin Silliman, Dec. 17, 1811; Silliman to Knight, Jan. 4 and 29, 1812; Silliman to M. F. Cogswell, Mar. 29, 1812. MSS., Yale University Library.

86. Petition of the Professors of the Medical Institution of Yale College, May 11, 1814, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 107.

87. Silliman's Reminiscences, in Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 261-262; Emily A. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98; Hubbard, *op. cit.*, p. 19, note; Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 27-28.

88. Petition of the Professors of the Medical Institution of Yale College, May 11, 1814, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 107.

89. Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MSS. 108, 109, 110; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 13, 1814, and Sept. 10, 1816.

90. Tryon Edwards, "Memoir of Joseph Bellamy," *The Works of Joseph Bellamy, D.D.* (Boston, 1853), I, vii-lxv; "Memoir of Nathanael Emmons Written by Himself," *The Works of Nathanael Emmons*, ed. Jacob Ide (Boston, 1842), I, ix-xxxvii; Edwards A. Park, "Memoir of Nathanael Emmons; with sketches of his friends and pupils," *The Works of Nathanael Emmons*, ed. Jacob Ide (Boston, 1861), I, 217-220; Nathaniel Bouton, *The Fathers of the New Hampshire Ministry: An Historical Discourse Preached before the General Association of New Hampshire, at its annual meeting in Manchester, August 22, 1848* (Concord, 1848), pp. 9-10; Leonard Bacon, *A Sermon to the First Church and Society in New Haven, 10th March, 1850, on completing the 25th year of the author's service in the pastoral office* (New Haven, 1850), pp. 3-4; Nahum Gale, *Memoir of Rev. Bennet Tyler* (Boston, 1860), pp. 25-30, 85, note; *Congregational Quarterly*, II, 354, 365 (Oct., 1860); Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 63, 144, 316-321, 552-556, 589-590; Leonard Bacon, "Commemorative Discourse," in *A Memorial of the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Founding of the Theological Seminary at Andover* (Andover, 1859), pp. 72-79; S. D. Clark, *The New England Ministry Sixty Years Ago: The Memoir of John Woodbridge, D.D.* (Boston, 1877), pp. 30-35, 466-467; "A Systematic Collection of Questions and Answers, in Divinity, January 22, 1794," a copy by Maltby Gelston when studying Divinity, of the Questions and Answers of Dr. Edwards, a son of President Edwards, when he gave instruction in Theology in his study in New Haven, to young men seeking the ministry, MS., Yale University Library.

91. Yale Corporation Records, June 24, Sept. 9, Oct. 6 and 22, 1795; Sept. 14, 1796; Sept. 13, 1797; Sept. 11, 1798; Sept. 10, and 11, 1799; Sept. 10, 1800; Sept. 11, 1801; Sept. 9, 1802; Sept. 15, 1803; Sept. 11, 1804; Sept. 10, 1805. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxiii; Silliman to Jeremiah Day, Dec. 28, 1805, in Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 206-207.

92. Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), p. 24; W. Safford to R. C. Morse, Nov. 7 and July 19, 1814, MSS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; Edwards, *Elias Cornelius*, pp. 26, 28, 41, 42; Theodore D. Woolsey, *A Discourse Commemorative of the Life and Services of the Rev. Chauncey Allen Goodrich* (New Haven, 1860), p. 19; Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 475-481, 544; J. L. Kingsley, "Sketch of the History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 205 (1836); Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 68-70.

93. *The Constitution and Associate Statutes of the Theological Seminary in Andover; with a Sketch of its Rise and Progress* (Boston, 1808), pp. 44-46.

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-46; *Plan of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Located at Princeton, N.J., Adopted by the General Assembly of 1811, and amended by future assemblies* (2nd ed., Elizabeth-Town, 1816), pp. 3-5; *Sketch of the rise, progress, and present state of the theological seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.—To which is subjoined a copy of the Constitution of the seminary* (Elizabethtown, 1817), p. 3; Leonard Woods, *History of Andover Theological Seminary* (Boston, 1885), pp. 17-18; Alexander M. Fisher to his parents, Nov. 22 and Dec. 31, 1814, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.

95. Dwight to Strong, July 21, 1808, MS. in possession of Miss Marion McG. Dwight of Brookline, Mass.

96. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 397-399; Dwight to Morse, July 6, 1805, and March 17, 1809, Morse to Dwight, Nov. 30, 1807, and Feb. 22, 1808, MSS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; Dwight to Morse, May 14, 1808, MS., A. P. Stokes

Collection of autograph letters, Yale University Library; William B. Sprague, *Life of Jedidiah Morse* (New York, 1874), pp. 97, 101-103, 107, 109; Dwight, *A Sermon preached at the Opening of the Theological Institution in Andover: and at the Ordination of the Rev. Eliphalet Pearson, LL.D., September 28, 1808* (Boston, 1808).

97. N. W. Taylor to Sprague, Feb. 20, 1844, in Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 161-162; J. P. Thompson, *Memoir of the late Timothy Dwight*, pp. 114-118; S. W. S. Dutton, "Sketch of the Life and Character of Rev. N. W. Taylor," *Congregational Quarterly*, II, 252 (July 1840); Leonard Bacon, ed., *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut* (New Haven, 1861), pp. 182-183.

98. These included Eli Ives, Jonathan Knight, Nathaniel W. Taylor, Josiah Gibbs, Eleazar T. Fitch, Chauncey A. Goodrich, Alexander M. Fisher, Denison Olmsted, Mathew R. Dutton.

99. *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 37-38; Thomas A. Thacher, *A Discourse Commemorative of Professor James L. Kingsley; Delivered by Request of the Faculty, in the Chapel of Yale College, October 29, 1852* (New York, 1852), p. 36; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 15-16, 27-29; Timothy Dwight, "Commemorative Address of Timothy Dwight," *Transactions of 150th Anniversary of Greenfield Church* (1876), pp. 62-64; Memorial of President and Fellows of Yale College to the General Assembly, Oct. 7, 1795, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 64; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, lxi.

## CHAPTER VIII—COLLEGE LIFE UNDER DWIGHT

1. Z. S. Barstow's reminiscences, in H. E. Parker, *A Discourse, preached in the First Congregational Church in Keene, N.H., Thursday, March 6th, 1873, at the Funeral of the Rev. Zedekiah Smith Barstow, D.D., for fifty years pastor of the First Church in Keene* (Hanover, N.H., 1873), pp. 21-25.

2. *The Laws of Yale-College, in New Haven, in Connecticut, Enacted by the President and Fellows, the Sixth Day of October, A.D. 1795* (New Haven, 1795), Chap. II; Yale Corporation Records, Mar. 12 and Sept. 12, 1798, Sept. 11, 1799, Sept. 11, 1804, Sept. 10 and 11, 1810, Sept. 12, 1815; F. B. Dexter, *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, I, 456, and note 2; A. H. Quint, "Sketch of Bennet Tyler," *Congregational Quarterly*, II, 352 (Oct., 1860); J. Brace to N. Gale, Jan. 11, 1859, in Gale, *Memoir of Bennet Tyler*, p. 22; John Pierpont to G. P. Fisher, Mar. 6, 1865, in Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 130; S. F. Jones to Sparks, Jan. 30, 1811, in H. D. Adams, *Life and Writings of Jared Sparks* (Boston, 1893), I, 44-45; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 207; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxx.

3. T. D. Woolsey, *Historical Discourse to Graduates of Yale College* (1850), p. 62; Z. S. Barstow's reminiscences, H. E. Parker, *op. cit.*, p. 25; *Sketches of Yale College, with Numerous Anecdotes, and Embellished with More Than Thirty Engravings, by a Member of that Institution* (New York, 1843), pp. 182-183.

4. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. IV, Art. IV; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 207-208, 210; Samuel I. Prime, *The Life of Samuel F. B. Morse* (New York, 1875), p. 22; Lindley Murray to Dwight, 1802, MS. owned by Dr. E. S. Dwight; William B. Sprague, *Life of Jedidiah Morse* (New York, 1874), pp. 203, 293; Alexander M. Fisher to his father, Aug. 28, 1815, Jan. 21, 1816, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; William T. Dwight, ed., *Select Discourses of Sereno Edwards Dwight* (Boston, 1851), pp. xxii-xxvi.



5. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. IV, Art. VI; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 209, 211; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. Diary, May 1-4, 1799, March 19-20, 1801, Sept. 3-5, 1801, March 15-16, 1802.

6. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 14, 1804; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 208-209; Prime, *Life of S. F. B. Morse*, pp. 21-22; Thomas A. Thacher, *A Discourse Commemorative of Professor James L. Kingsley* (New York, 1852), pp. 31-32.

7. Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), p. 22; W. L. Kingsley, *Yale College*, I, 466; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, lx-lxi; Denison Olmsted, "Timothy Dwight As a Teacher," *American Journal of Education*, V, 583 (Sept., 1858); Charles Beecher, ed., *Autobiography, Correspondence, etc.*, of Lyman Beecher, D.D. (New York, 1871), I, 48.

8. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. IV, Art. IV; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 208.

9. E. C. Tracy, *Memoir of the Life of Jeremiah Evarts* (Boston, 1845), pp. 13-14.

10. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, lx; Olmsted, *loc. cit.*; Alexander M. Fisher to his father, Nov. 26, 1812, Jan. 16, 1813, and his notes on Dwight's Remarks on Paley's Philosophy, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 48; Mathew R. Dutton, *A Sketch of & Reflections on the Life and Character of Doct. Dwight*, MS., Yale University Library; Timothy Bishop to Thomas Robbins, Jan. 11, 1796, Robbins Correspondence, Conn. Historical Soc.

11. *Dwight's Decisions*.

12. Benjamin Silliman, MS. diary, Nov. 9-10, 1796, Yale University Library.

13. Z. S. Barstow's reminiscences, H. E. Parker, *Discourse at Funeral of Rev. Z. S. Barstow* (1873), p. 25.

14. Stephen Farrar Jones to Sparks, Jan. 30 and May 28, 1811, in Herbert D. Adams, *Life and Writings of Jared Sparks* (Boston, 1893), I, 45-46, 53-54, note 2.

15. Noah Porter to Fisher, Dec. 12, 1864, in Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 51. See also Gardiner Spring, *Personal Reminiscences of the Life and Times of Gardiner Spring, Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church, in the City of New York* (New York, 1866), II, 285.

16. Memorial of the President and Fellows of Yale College to the General Assembly, Oct. 7, 1795, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 64.

17. *Ibid.*; also Report to General Assembly by its committee on the Representation and Memorial of the President and Fellows of Yale College, Oct. 21, 1795, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 62.

18. Yale Corporation Records, Prudential Committee, Dec. 12, 1797.

19. Representation of the President and Fellows of Yale College to General Assembly, Conn. Archives, Series II, College and Schools, 1718-1840, I, MS. 72.

20. Dwight to Wolcott, Jan. 18, 1808, Yale Corporation Records.

21. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1804, Sept. 14, 1808, and *passim*.

22. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 205.

23. Prudential Committee Records, Sept. 8, 1806.

24. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. IX; 1808, Chap. IX.

25. A. M. Fisher to his father, Dec. 30, 1809, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.

26. Dwight to Isaac Beers, Jan. 9, 1796 (Brock Collection, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, Calif.), and July 27, 1797 (owned by Lemuel A. Welles, Ridgefield, Conn.).

27. Yale Corporation Records, July 5, 1766; freshman customs of 1764, quoted in "History of Yale College," *American Journal of Education*, V, 561 (Sept., 1858); James L. Kingsley, "Sketch of History of Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, VIII, 216-217 (1836); T. D. Woolsey, *Historical Discourse to Graduates of Yale College*, pp. 47, 54-56.

28. Freshman customs of 1764, "History of Yale College," *loc. cit.*; Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, pp. 18, 31-33; *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. II, Art. IV.

29. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. II, Art. VIII.

30. Benjamin Silliman, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33; Freshman customs of 1764, "History of Yale College," *loc. cit.*; *Laws of Yale College*, 1795, Chap. II, Arts. VII-VIII; *American Literary Magazine*, II, 269-273 (May, 1848); Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Oct. 30, 1800; Benjamin Silliman, MS. diary, Nov. 12, 1795, Yale University Library; Journal of William Wheeler, in Cornelia P. Lathrop, *Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield, Connecticut* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 39-41.

31. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Oct. 31, 1800.

32. Yale Corporation Records, June 24, July 20, Sept. 23, and Oct. 6, 1795; Josiah Meigs, Representation to the Corporation on Fagging, Aug. 18, 1795, MS., Meigs Papers, Yale University Library; *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, pp. 11-12; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxix-xxx.

33. Timothy Dwight, Sr., to Dwight, Dec. 30, 1771, Mass. Historical Soc., *Proceedings*, Series 2, XIII, 124.

34. Timothy Dwight, *True Means of Establishing Public Happiness* (New Haven, 1795), pp. 27-28.

35. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1804.

36. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. VIII; Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 24-27.

37. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxx-xxxi; Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 24-27; M. R. Dutton, *A Sketch of, and Reflections on, the Life and Character of Doct. Dwight*, MS., Yale University Library; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 212-213; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1804; Timothy Bishop to Thomas Robbins, Jan. 11, 1796, MS., Robbins Correspondence, Conn. Historical Soc.

One of Dwight's pupils testified (Z. S. Barstow's reminiscences in H. E. Parker, *Discourse preached at the Funeral of Rev. Z. S. Barstow*, Hanover, N.H., 1873, p. 25):

"With the college students also, [Dwight's] influence was wonderful. When, after public prayers, he said 'Sedete omnes,' we knew that we were to be reprimanded, and it was always done *ex animo*, and to the purpose. But after the *fortiter in re*, he knew how to put on the *suaviter in modo*, and there was a kindness and gentleness of manner and tone that restored good humor to all, as he concluded, 'Juvenes, humanum est errare.' Courtesy and dignity of manner were combined in a most remarkable degree in President Dwight, and the students who were ready to call him 'Pope' on being summoned to his study, generally left his presence with the exclamation, 'He is a perfect gentleman!' 'He is a wonderful man!'"

Dwight's technique is indicated by these notes of Theodore Dwight, Jr., on the President's speech to the senior class, Nov. 24, 1813 (*Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 53-56):

"The Tutors tell me, young gentlemen, that you make too much noise in the hall [Commons]. I wish to turn your attention to this subject early, that you may correct your manners there in due season. I have observed that disorder

in college almost always begins in that place. There you are frequently collected together, and have opportunities to do many things without being particularly overlooked. When a youth begins to deviate from strict propriety, he usually first breaks a law of no great importance, before he proceeds to commit great offences. The progress toward the gallows is gradual; and so it is in ill conduct at this college. A student indulges in some petty misbehaviour, and step by step increases in the course of disobedience till he brings severe punishment upon himself.

"You will observe that the laws of Yale College are very mild, and that every precaution has been used in framing them to prevent the necessity of severe punishment, though still sometimes it is found necessary. Great labor has been bestowed in improving them, so that their operation might be as gentle, just, and salutary as possible. They were originally copied, with some variations, from those of the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and were founded on the principle that every offence was to be cured by the infliction of a penalty. Numerous fines were imposed, which were formerly collected from those students who infringed the rules. They have been considerably altered within a few years, and for the better: for the system has been changed for the parental, which is calculated to prevent the commission of crimes by moral influences, rather than to punish them when committed. I have exerted myself much to procure the mollification of the old rules as I considered them too severe, and not suitable to the ends proposed by laws. One consideration is, that the smaller instances of misconduct in the young, often proceed not from a disposition to do hurt, but from high spirits. Of these I am not disposed to think too gravely, nor am I inclined to punish them too severely. They are, however, not to be disregarded: they form the first link in the chain: it is best to prevent the greater evils to which they lead by beginning early. I know the tendency of such things, and I have apprehensions of the result if they are allowed to proceed without check. You will not be apt to watch against things which in themselves may be of little or no importance: but if you do not, you will by degrees arrive at greater and greater offences, and find yourselves farther and farther removed from the line of uprightness. . . .

"The most serious disorders here, generally begin in the hall; and the first intimation of evil generally is an unusual noise among the students while at their meals. Whatever is the reason, it is true, that whenever any thing is designed to be prevented from hurting the conscience, noise is resorted to. Mobs are always noisy. Noise in all instances accompanies wrong, except in cases in which concealment is necessary to the perpetrator. But noise is unbecoming you while employed at your meals. You would not make it at a gentleman's table: why do you not consider your tutors and your friends as gentlemen? Stillness is as much a law in civilized countries, as any statute made by legislators.

"Your class entered college young, and therefore, as a class, had much volatility. But you are now old enough, and high enough in rank, to conduct with propriety and to act without noise. And you ought to consider your influence: your example, if an example of order and propriety, will have a great effect upon the other classes, who will ever be observing your conduct. They feel themselves justified, or at least excused, in doing what they see you do. Although you have not all been as remarkable for good conduct as would have been desirable, you have it in your power to conduct as well in the hall as you do here; and I have no fault to find with your manners in my presence, with the exception of a little whispering now and then among some of you, which shows the remains of the boy. In the concerns of the senior class I always feel a particular interest, as it is under my more immediate care, and take great pleasure in having them conduct according to the strictest rules of propriety. I cannot but hope, therefore, that



you will prove hereafter, that all your former volatility does not afford a just criterion for your minds, but that you can think and act soberly.

"If, however, you should practice the opposite behavior, would not the effect of it in the future be painful as well as injurious? Would it not hurt your feelings to reflect, that you had contributed to destroy the character of a fellow student, and to injure the happiness of a parent?

"If you wish to pursue the course of wisdom, attend seriously to this subject now, for it has been timely introduced that you may check the beginning of evil. The disturbances which have been known here have generally had one beginning. After students have been for some time noisy in the hall, they have next begun to throw bread, break vessels, overset tables, and then proceed to bold and daring offences and crimes, which have procured their dismissal. The danger of such disgrace and evil may easily be avoided by a little reflection at the outset.

"These arguments, young gentlemen, I should think sufficient to convince an opponent: but I hope I have no opponents here. I hope I speak to friends."

38. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxx-xxx; A. M. Fisher's notes on "Dr. Dwight's Farewell Address" in Fisher's notebook, "Lectures on Chemistry," MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.

39. Dwight to Morse, June 29, 1797, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.

40. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxii, lix.

41. Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 40.

42. Willard Child, "Reminiscences of President Dwight," in B. W. Dwight, *Hist. of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 161-163.

43. A. M. Fisher to his parents, Dec. 20, 1818, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.

44. A. M. Fisher to his father, June 8, 1811, and Dec. 20, 1818, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; Jeremiah Evarts, then a freshman, noted in his diary, Feb. 18, 1799: "About 9 o'clock news came that sailors had come to pick a quarrel with the scholars; I went out with the rest to see the fray. They separated about 10 without many blows." Again on March 25 he recorded: "We began to play ball. About 8 o'clock in the evening we were alarmed by the cry of sailors & the lower sort of town people, who came up to whip the scholars, under pretense of having been challenged by them. As they dared not come into the yard, and we would not condescend to go out, they dispersed about nine having wounded one scholar badly & one or two slightly. Five or six of the mob were put into jail by the authority of the city."

45. Moses Stuart to Silliman, Dec. 21, 1802, and Feb. 6, 1803, in Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 114-115, 117.

46. Samuel S. Smith to Jedidiah Morse, Mar. 10, 1802, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.

47. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 212-213; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxx; Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight*, p. 27. Joseph D. Wickham, one of Dwight's pupils in the class of 1815, became the head of a school in Vermont where he followed Dwight's parental system of discipline successfully; the school numbered 120 boys at one time and had a "female" department. Wickham probably was one of many Yale graduates who followed Dwight's example, remembering particularly his advice, "Be the young man's friend" (Mrs. Wickham's reminiscences, *A Long and Well Spent Life: Recollections of Joseph D. Wickham, D.D.*, New York, 1893, pp. 16, 18, 25).

48. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 8, 11, and 12, 1798.

49. *Ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1798.
50. Jedidiah Morse to Mrs. Morse, Oct. 23, 1807, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; S. F. B. Morse to his parents, Oct. 22, 1805, and June 7, 1807, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 10, 15.
51. *Memoir of Jonathan Leavitt, a Member of the Junior Class in Yale College, who died at New Haven, the 10th of May, 1821, aged 18 years and one month, by a Sister* (New Haven, 1822), pp. 57, 97, 119.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60, 63; A. M. Fisher to his father, Dec. 30, 1809, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; William Jay to his grandson, in Bayard Tuckerman, *William Jay, and the Constitutional Movement for the Abolition of Slavery* (New York, 1893), pp. 6-7; Willard Child, "Reminiscences of President Dwight," in B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 161-163.
53. A. M. Fisher to his father, Dec. 30, 1809, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
54. S. F. B. Morse to his parents, June 7, 1807, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 15.
55. S. F. B. Morse to his parents, June 18, 1807, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 16; Jedidiah Morse to S. F. B. Morse, June 27 and July 13, 1807, MSS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.
56. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. XII; 1808, p. 34; 1811, p. 33. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1799, Sept. 10, 1807, Sept. 12, 1809, Sept. 11, 1810; W. Safford to Richard Morse, July 3, 1810, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 211; Records of Prudential Committee, annual Commons financial statements, MSS., in the office of the Secretary of Yale University; A. M. Fisher to his parents, 1809-1813, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
57. A. M. Fisher to his parents, 1809-1813, MSS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
58. S. F. B. Morse to his parents, Mar. 6, 1808, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 16-17.
59. Mrs. Morse to S. F. B. Morse, Nov. 23, 1805, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 11-12.
60. S. F. B. Morse to his parents, June 25, 1810, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 20-21.
61. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Oct. and Nov., 1798, July 24, Aug. 3, and Sept. 7, 1801, Jan. 4 and Feb. 1, 1802.
62. Daniel Read's Letterbook, copy of a letter to Joseph Forman, May 20, 1793, MS., New Haven Colony Historical Society.
63. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. XI; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1805, Sept. 13, 1814, and Sept. 10, 1816; Prudential Committee's Commons statements from Dec. 15, 1795, to Jan. 8, 1817.
64. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. XI; William Jay to his grandson, 1852, in Bayard Tuckerman, *William Jay*, p. 6.
65. G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 36.
66. Timothy Bishop to Thomas Robbins, Jan. 11, 1796, MS., Robbins Correspondence, Conn. Historical Soc.
67. Yale Corporation Records, July 5, 1796.
68. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Oct. 27, Nov. 24 and 29, 1798, and Feb. 11-12, 1799.

69. *Ibid.*, Aug. 15 and 18, 1801.
70. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1807.
71. S. F. B. Morse to his parents, Dec. 28, 1807, and Jan. 25, 1808, in S. I. Prime, *Life of S. F. B. Morse*, pp. 17-18.
72. *Ibid.*
73. A. M. Fisher to his father, Nov. 5, 1809, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
74. William Jay to his grandson, 1852, in Bayard Tuckerman, *William Jay*, p. 6.
75. A. M. Fisher to his father, Dec. 20, 1818, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Oct. 26, 1798, Feb. 3 and March 22, 1799; *Quarterly Register of American Educational Society*, May, 1832, p. 345.
76. G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 33.
77. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. X, pp. 31-34; Yale Corporation Records, Aug. 31, 1813; Benjamin Trumbull, Accounts of the Butler (1791), MSS., Yale University Library.
78. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. X, pp. 31-34; Yale Corporation Records, *passim*. The Rev. Daniel Butler (W. L. Kingsley, Yale College, I, 299-300) expressed the opinion that the Buttery must have been a rendezvous for the idle and disorderly, a receptacle of gossip and noise which was well discontinued in 1817 after Dwight's death; but the rules governing it, and the character of the Butlers, hardly substantiate such a harsh judgment.
79. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. X, pp. 31-34; Yale Corporation Records, June 24, 1795.
80. Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 50-51.
81. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 13 and Dec. 12, 1797.
82. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Nov. 10, 1798, June 21-27 and July 8-13, 1799, and Nov. 2, 1800.
83. A. M. Fisher to his father, June 1, 1813, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
84. Dwight to Morse, June 20, 1797, and Mar. 17, 1809, and W. Safford to R. C. Morse, Mar. 5, 1811, MSS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.
85. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, p. 19; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 11, 1799.
86. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Apr. 20, 1801.
87. Benjamin Silliman, MS. diary, Oct. 29, 1795, and Jan. 13, 1796, Yale University Library; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 19 and Dec. 2, 1799, June 2, 1801, and May 18, 1802.
88. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, 1799-1802, *passim*; S. P. Staples to Silliman, July 7, 1798, in G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 67; Daniel Read's Journal, July 4, 1798, pp. 76-77, MS., New Haven Colony Historical Soc.
89. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. IV, Art. VIII, p. 18; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 210.
90. A. M. Fisher to his father, July 23, 1813, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library; W. Safford to R. C. Morse, Dec. 7, 1815, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, p. 37.
91. Jedidiah Morse to Mrs. Morse, Sept. 6, 1802, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; A. M. Fisher to his father, Aug. 12, 1813, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.



92. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 8, 1799, and Sept. 6, 1801; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, lxv; Dwight, *Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy* (New Haven, 1798), p. 66.
93. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 210-211; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 12, 1798, Sept. 9, 1800, and Sept. 8, 1801; *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, p. 40; G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 237.
94. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, Chap. XIII, pp. 39-40; Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 14, 1796; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 210-211; Benjamin Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, p. 13.
95. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 211; Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 237; Willard Child, "Reminiscences of President Dwight," in B. W. Dwight, *Hist. of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 161-163; Silliman, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
96. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, June 2 and Sept. 9, 1801; Commencement Program, A. M. Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
97. A. M. Fisher to his father, May 4, 1813, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
98. S. F. B. Morse to Richard Morse, in E. L. Morse, *S. F. B. Morse*, I, 26.
99. Yale Corporation Records, Sept. 10, 1805.
100. *Laws of Yale-College*, 1795, pp. 39-40; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 210; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 9-11, 1801; A. M. Fisher to his father, Aug. 12, 1813, MS., Fisher Papers, Yale University Library.
101. Original owned by the late Mrs. J. V. B. Thayer, of Brooklyn, N. Y.; the diplomas of August Street in the New Haven Col. Hist. Soc., and of A. M. Fisher, in Yale University Library, are good examples.

## CHAPTER IX—THE CONQUEST OF INFIDELITY

1. Delivered in 1793, and published in 1794.
2. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 366 ff.; Dwight, *A Discourse on Some Events of the Last Century* (New Haven, 1801), pp. 10-11, 18-19.
3. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 372-381.
4. Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 43; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxv-xxvi, lxvi; M. R. Dutton, "A Sketch of, and Reflections on the Life and Character of Doct. Dwight," MS., Yale University Library; C. A. Goodrich, "Narrative of Revivals of Religion in Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, X, 294 (Feb., 1838); Benjamin Silliman, *A Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), p. 19; Records of the Church of Christ in Yale College in New Haven: From June 30, A.D. 1757, to Sept. 7, A.D. 1817, MS., Yale University Library; Silliman, *An Address, etc.*, pp. 34-35.
5. Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxviii-xxix, xxxiii; Beecher, *loc. cit.*; Silliman diary, Nov. 21, 28, and 29, 1796, MS., Yale University Library.
6. Moral Society, Journal of Meetings, 1797-1819, MS., Yale University Library; Azel E. Roe, *History of the First Ecclesiastical Society in East Windsor, . . . with a Sketch of the Life of the Rev. Shubael Bartlett* (Hartford, 1857), p. 64; David E. Bartlett, "Shubael Bartlett," *Memorial Biographies of the New England Historic Genealogical Soc.*, II, 188 (1881); C. A. Goodrich, "Narrative of Revivals in Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, X, 294 (Feb., 1838); Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Feb. 18, 1799.

7. Beecher, *op. cit.*, I, 100-102.
8. M. R. Dutton, *op. cit.*
9. Silliman to his mother, July 11, 1802, in G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 83.
10. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxviii-xxix, lxvi; Beecher, *op. cit.*, I, 43; Dutton, *op. cit.*; C. A. Goodrich, *op. cit.*, X, 296; C. A. Goodrich's chapter on revivals in Robert Baird, *Religion in the U.S.A.* (Glasgow, 1844), pp. 454-455; Dwight's account of revival of 1802 in *Conn. Evangelical Magazine*, III, 30-32 (July, 1802); Fisher, *op. cit.*, I, 19, 49-50, 52; D. D. Field, *Brief Memoirs of the Members of the Class Graduated at Yale College in September, 1802* (New Haven, 1863), Preface, and pp. 8-9.
11. *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 38-39.
12. Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 376-377.
13. Dwight, *Theology*, I, 26-31; Dwight, "Evidences of Divine Revelation," *Panoplist*, VI, 204.
14. *Panoplist*, VI, 391-396, 441-446, VII, 5-11, 62; Dwight, *Theology*, I, 22, 150, 434-439, 448-488, III, 42-43; Genesis 3:14-19.
15. *Panoplist*, IV, 214 ff., VII, 346-354, 436-444, 529-535, IX, 4-10, 49-51; Dwight, *Travels*, II, 430-432, III, 189, 351-352, IV, 55-56; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Aug. 19, 1801; Abraham Rees, *The Cyclopaedia; or Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (Philadelphia, 1st American ed.), II, article on Ark.
16. *Panoplist*, IX, 51-56, 111-117; Dwight, *Travels*, I, 124-130, III, 183-187; *Dwight's Decisions*, 122-128; Dwight to Josiah Meigs, June 24, 1799, MS. (courtesy of Miss Inglis Griswold of New York City).
17. *Panoplist*, IX, 111-115.
18. Benjamin Silliman, "Remarks on the late President Dwight, his talents, attainments, associates, labors, and services to his fellow men, Delivered before the Historical Association at Hartford, Monday, January 9, 1854," MS., Silliman Papers, Yale University Library; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), p. 32; Dwight, *Theology*, I, 21; Dwight, *Travels*, II, 430-432; *Panoplist*, IX, 115; Dwight to Robison, Mar. 20, 1805, MS., Pennsylvania Historical Society; G. P. Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, I, 49-50, 52, II, 345, 348; S. I. Prime, *Life of S. F. B. Morse*, pp. 19-24, 730, 732-733; E. L. Morse, ed., *Samuel F. B. Morse, His Letters and Journals*, I, x.
19. Dutton, *op. cit.*; Dwight, *Discourse on Some Events of the Last Century*, pp. 20, 45.
20. Sherman to Sprague, Feb. 7, 1844, Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 164.
21. Taylor to Sprague, Feb. 20, 1844, in Sprague, *op. cit.*, II, 163.
22. Jonathan Mason diary, Mass. Historical Soc., *Proceedings*, Series 2, II, 7.
23. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Sept. 7, 1800.
24. MS. Biog. Hints; Taylor to Sprague, Feb. 20, 1844, in Sprague, *loc. cit.*
25. Taylor to Sprague, Feb. 20, 1844, in Sprague, *loc. cit.*
26. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, Jan. 3, 1802, and *passim*; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxiif, lxiii; Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 44; Mathew R. Dutton, diary, Nov. 2, 1806, MS., Yale University Library; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 19-20; Eleazar Foster, "Heads of a Theological System of Discourses, preached by Dr. Dwight in the College Chapel," MS., Yale University Library.

27. Willard Child, "Reminiscences of President Dwight," in B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 161-163; F. B. Dexter, "Student Life at Yale College Under the First President Dwight," *Selections from Miscellaneous Historical Papers of Fifty Years* (New Haven, 1918), p. 386; Cyrus Yale, *A Discourse Before the North Consociation of Litchfield County, at their Annual Meeting in Goshen, Connecticut, September 25, 1849* (New Haven, 1849), pp. 15-16; Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), pp. 19-21.

28. Dwight, *Travels*, I, 161-163, III, 174-176; Dwight, *A Discourse on Some Events of the Last Century*, p. 16; "Biographical Notice of the Rev. Timothy Dwight," *Analectic Magazine*, IX, 279, (Apr., 1817); Dwight, "A Charge to the People," *The Dignity and Excellence of the Gospel, Illustrated in a Discourse Delivered April 8, 1812, at the Ordination of the Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, as the Pastor of the First Congregation in New Haven* (New York, 1812), pp. 45, 47; Dwight, *Theology*, III, 39, IV, 458; *Dwight's Decisions*, p. 111; MS. Biog. Hints; Silliman, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

29. Dwight to Morse, Dec. 31, 1810 [1811?], May 6, 1811, and Dec. 21, 1812, MSS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library.

30. Dwight, "A Charge to the People," *The Dignity and Excellence of the Gospel, etc.*, p. 47.

31. For Dwight's theological ideas see his *Theology; explained and defended, in a Series of Sermons* (5 vols., Middletown, 1818-1819), and *Sermons*, (2 vols., New Haven, 1828).

32. Dwight, *Theology*, I, 254-255, III, 87-93, 98, IV, 509-511.

33. Dwight, *Theology*, I, 253-256, III, 98-105, IV, 496-499, 511-533; Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, July 25, 1801.

34. Joshua Leavitt, "Dr. Dwight's remarks on Vincent's Catechism," MS., New York Public Library; William B. Sprague, "Life of Timothy Dwight," *The Library of American Biography*, ed. Jared Sparks (Boston, 1845), IV, 288-289; Dwight, *Theology* (5 vols.), *passim*.

35. The Rev. Noah Porter, of Farmington, Conn., one of Dwight's pupils in the class of 1803 at Yale, stated the problem which faced these preachers, in a letter to William B. Sprague, Mar. 12, 1832, printed in Sprague, *Letters on Revivals of Religion* (2nd ed., N.Y., 1833), pp. 296-297:

"That much depends on the character of preaching in revivals cannot be doubted; & in this perhaps nothing is more important than a scriptural & skilful application of the doctrines of dependence on the one hand and of obligation on the other. I have sometimes painfully apprehended that but for my own indiscretion in this respect, our experience during the 20 tedious years that followed the revival in 1799, more than two-thirds of which were subsequent to my ordination, might have been different. Those doctrines which exhibit God as the sovereign cause,—decrees, election, etc., had, for a series of years, been leading topics of preaching in this town; and by means of them, many self-dependent hopes had been destroyed, many hearts of enmity against God unveiled, & many souls converted & saved. But many also remained unconverted; & the time at length arrived, when this kind of preaching had produced its full effect upon them. They either would not listen to it, or they made it a pretext for abandoning all serious attention to their salvation. Now, dear sir, never for a moment have I doubted the importance of an undisguised declaration of the whole counsel of God, & particularly of those doctrines which exhibit the dependence of fallen man on the sovereign grace of God; but if experience & observation have taught me anything, it is that there is a way of discussing these



subjects most logically in the pulpit which does little good; that there are theories sometimes connected with them which are productive of great evil; and that even when preached as they lie in the sacred volume, if the hearers are not also taught their relations to God, as accountable subjects of his government, & capable heirs of salvation, & if the obligations & encouragements which belong to these relations, are not carried home to their hearts, a general recklessness as to the concerns of salvation may be expected to prevail. If they are not in fact, made to feel that they are their own destroyers, that fallen, dependent, & lost as they are, salvation is most freely & sincerely offered them, and that if they perish, the blame must forever rest upon themselves; no wonder if hard thoughts of God & a heartless, discouraged & obdurate spirit of self-justification be the general result. That preaching no doubt is the best which is most conformed to the example of Him who was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but showed first to them at Damascus, & at Jerusalem, & throughout the coasts of Judea, & then to Gentiles, that men should repent & turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

36. Dwight, *Sermons* (Edinburgh, 1828), I, iv, 240 ff., II, 401-418; Dwight to Henry E. Dwight, May 24, 1816, MS., courtesy of Miss Marian McG. Dwight; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 387; Dwight, *Discourse on Some Events of the Last Century* (New Haven, 1801), pp. 17-18; *Religious Intelligencer*, I, 163, 211 (Aug. 10, 1816); S. W. S. Dutton, *History of North Church, New Haven*, p. 106 note.

37. Jeremiah Evarts, MS. diary, May 20-23, 1802.

38. "Records of the Church of Christ in Yale College in New Haven: From June 30, A.D. 1757 to Sept. 7, A.D. 1817," MS., Yale University Library; [Timothy Dwight] "Brief account of the revival of religion now prevailing in Yale College," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, III, 30-32 (July, 1802); Dwight to Jedidiah Morse, July 22, 1802, MS., Anson P. Stokes Collection of Autograph Letters and Engravings, Yale University Library; Heman Humphrey, *Revival Sketches and Manual* (New York, 1859), pp. 198, 206; Gardiner Spring, *Personal Reminiscences*, I, 79-82; Gale, *Memoir of Bennet Tyler*, pp. 16-20; Samuel Merwin, *Discourse on completion of fifty years service in the ministry*, p. 11; E. C. Tracy, *Memoir of the Life of Jeremiah Evarts* (Boston, 1845), pp. 19-28; C. A. Goodrich, "Narrative of Revivals of Religion in Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, X, 289, 294-297 (Feb., 1838); D. D. Field, "Memoirs of the Class of 1802," MS. (1852), Yale University Library; D. D. Field, *Brief Memoirs of the Members of the Class Graduated at Yale College in September, 1802* (New Haven, 1863), pp. 9, 35-36; J. Evarts, MS. diary, May 11, 1802.

39. [Charles Augustus Goodrich], *Incidents in the Life of President Dwight* (New Haven, 1831), pp. 126-137.

40. C. A. Goodrich, "Narrative of Revivals of Religion in Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, X, 298-299 (Feb., 1838).

41. *Ibid.*, X, 299-300; *Incidents in Life of President Dwight*, pp. 139-141; Bennet Tyler, *Memoir of the Life & Character of Asabel Nettleton* (Hartford, 1844), pp. 40-41.

42. Mathew Dutton diary, MS., Yale University Library.

43. B. B. Edwards, *Memoir of the Rev. Elias Cornelius* (Boston, 1833), pp. 19-28, 32-35; Goodrich, "Narrative of Revivals of Religion in Yale College," *American Quarterly Register*, X, 300-303 (Feb., 1838); Ward Safford to Richard Morse, Mar. 16, 1815, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; *Conn. Evangelical Magazine*, VII, 30-40 (July, 1806); *Conn. Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer*, VIII, 192, 232-236 (May, June, 1815); William B. Sprague to G. P. Fisher, July 11, 1865, in Fisher, *Life of Benjamin Silliman*, II, 375.

## CHAPTER X—NATIONAL HORIZONS: END OF THE RECORD

1. Dwight, *A Sermon, Delivered in Boston, September 16, 1813, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston, 1813), pp. 25-28. See also his *Duty of Americans at the Present Crisis* (New Haven, 1798).

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28; Dwight to Treadwell, Aug. 4, 1810, MS., Boston Public Library; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 139, 158; B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 254; Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxvii; William B. Sprague, *Life of Timothy Dwight*, pp. 338-340, 346; Rufus Anderson, *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston, 1861), pp. 58-59; Constitution of the Connecticut Society for the Promotion of the Freedom, and the Relief of Persons unlawfully holden in Bondage, Sept. 13, 1792, MS., Baldwin Papers, Yale University Library; G. F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (New York, 1903), I, 16; F. H. Gillett, *George F. Hoar* pp. 6-7; Dwight, *The Charitable Blessed* (New Haven, 1810), pp. 20-23; Leonard Bacon, ed., *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, pp. 151, 160, 163-164, 166.

3. Dwight, *Sermons*, II, 166-167.

4. *Dwight's Decisions*, pp. 327-332.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 32.

7. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 26-34.

8. Dwight, *Travels*, III, 63, IV, 518; Dwight, *The True Means of Establishing Public Happiness*, pp. 1-40; Dwight, *Virtuous Rulers a National Blessing* (Hartford, 1791), pp. 1-42.

9. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxix; Dwight to William Leffingwell, Jan. 23, 1799, MS., New York Public Library; *Historical Magazine*, II, 12-13 (Jan., 1858); Dwight to [recipient unknown as MS. is torn], Feb. 5, 1800, MS., New York State Library, Albany.

10. *American Mercury*, Apr. 23 and 30, 1801, July 26 and Sept. 13, 1804, Aug. 1 and Sept. 12, 1805, and Apr. 2, 1816; *Conn. Courant*, Apr. 6 and Sept. 28, 1801; Alexander Johnston, *Connecticut: A Study of a Commonwealth-Democracy* (Boston, 1887), pp. 245 ff.; [John Cosens Ogden], *Friendly Remarks to the People of Connecticut, upon their College and Schools* (1799), pp. 6-7, 20; *An Appeal to the Candid upon the Present State of Religion and Politics in Connecticut* [1798], pp. 9-14; *A Short History of late Ecclesiastical Oppressions in New England and Vermont* (Richmond, 1799), pp. 18-19; *A View of the New England Illuminati* (Philadelphia, 1799), pp. 9, 15, 17.

11. Dwight to B. W. Dwight, Dec. 8, 1801, MS. transcript inserted in B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 166-167, author's annotated copy, Yale University Library.

12. Henry Bronson, *History of Waterbury, Conn.* (Waterbury, 1858), pp. 385-386.

Some modern commentators have commonly quoted a fiery passage from Dwight's address, *The Duty of Americans at the Present Crisis* (New Haven, 1798), delivered in New Haven on July 4, 1798, with the assumption that Dwight was preaching anti-Jeffersonian propaganda. Apparently without having read the discourse itself, James Truslow Adams so used the passage in his *New England in the Republic* (Boston, 1926), p. 222, taking it from Charles Beard, *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy* (New York, 1915), pp. 365 ff.; and in his *Epic of America* (Boston, 1931), p. 137, Adams again uses the quotation as a definite prediction by Dwight that if Jefferson were elected President,

"we may see our wives and daughters the victims of legal prostitution" and other equally dire consequences. A reading of the whole discourse shows this use of the quotation to be quite unwarranted. Dwight made the speech in 1798, two years before the election of 1800, and certainly did not have that event in mind. The "Present Crisis" which he did clearly have in mind was international in character, arising from the strained situation then existing in the relations between the United States and France. It was a Fourth of July oration delivered at a time when feeling against France was running high as a result of the X. Y. Z. affair, French seizures of American ships, and the Directory's high-handed policy. Dwight had denounced infidel philosophy for years before the Federalist and Jeffersonian Republican parties came into existence. Now he did it again because he thought such philosophy actuated the men then ruling France, as well as Terrorists like Collet d'Herbois and Carrier. In the face of a very real threat of war with a France controlled by men of this stamp, Dwight actually used this occasion to urge national unity, and conciliation between parties, in support of the American government's foreign policy. It is true that he was a stanch Federalist, who had no liking for Jefferson and Madison as men or Presidents. Decisively convinced, for reasons described above, that "Infidelity" deserved only the most severe castigation, he frequently used strong language in condemning it; but it was no more violent than that used by very intelligent persons in denouncing the morals, motives, and practical application of Nazi and Communist ideology in the 1940's. Dwight was not preaching partisan politics for electioneering purposes; nor was he predicting that a Jeffersonian victory in 1800 would immediately transform all American women into strumpets. It is impossible to understand Dwight by reading a short passage in a single oration, separated from its context—especially when no attempt is made to relate it to the circumstances of its delivery.

Unfortunately an interpretation, once in print, can be readily repeated. A similarly misleading impression is given in S. E. Morison and H. S. Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic* (New York, 1930), p. 253, note 1; Claude G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Hamilton* (Boston, 1925), p. 474.

V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, (New York, 1927), I, 360-363, gives an estimate of Dwight which seems to have been based on preconceived prejudice rather than historical evidence. Typical of the author's hasty judgment is his remark that in *The Conquest of Canaan* "a well-stocked mind is pouring out the gatherings of years." In fact, Dwight began writing this poem when he was nineteen years of age, and finished it when he was twenty-two. Parrington, Professor of English Literature, evidently had a superficial acquaintance with Dwight's career, and no understanding of the man. The purely literary aspect of Dwight's career cannot be appreciated apart from the other aspects.

13. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xxxvii; W. L. Kingsley, *Sketch of the History of Yale College*, I, 331, 336; *Providence Gazette and Country Journal*, Feb. 1, 1812, p. 1; *New Haven Gazette & Conn. Mag.*, I, 281-282 (Feb. 1, 1787). The best sketch of Dwight's literary efforts is Moses Coit Tyler, *Three Men of Letters* (New York, 1895).

14. Dwight, *Remarks on the Review of Inchiquin's Letters, published in the Quarterly Review* (Boston, 1815), *passim*; Dwight, *Travels*, IV, 216 ff., 511-527.

15. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xliii; American Antiquarian Soc., *Proceedings*, New Series, XII, 3.

16. S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 353; B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 83; Leonard Bacon, "Historical Discourse, delivered at Norwich, June 23, 1859, before the General Association of Connecticut, at the celebration of its 150th Anniversary," *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, p. 9.



17. S. G. Goodrich, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, I, 338, 348, 351-352 note, 353-355; B. W. Dwight, *History of the Descendants of John Dwight*, I, 157.

18. Benjamin Silliman, *Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817), p. 30; *Quarterly Register of American Education Soc.*, May 21, 1831, pp. 272-273; R. M. Sherman to William B. Sprague, Feb. 7, 1844, in Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, II, 164-165; American Antiquarian Soc., *Proceedings*, New Series, XII, 2-4; Theodore D. Woolsey, *Historical Discourse to Graduates of Yale College* (1850), p. 38.

19. Memoir in Dwight, *Theology*, I, xli-lii, lvii; [C. A. Goodrich], *Incidents in the Life of President Dwight*, pp. 94-97; Jedidiah Morse to Joseph Lyman, Mar. 4, 1817, MS., Morse Papers, Yale University Library; *Religious Intelligencer*, Jan. 11 and 18, 1817, I, 527, 529; Yale Corporation Records, Feb. 11, 1817; Prudential Committee Records, Jan. 14 and 15, 1817; *Conn. Journal*, Jan. 14, 21, and 28, 1817; Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 330.

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